

Technical Report 1264

Cross-Cultural Strategies for Improving the Teaching, Training, and Mentoring Skills of Military Transition Team Advisors

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CROSS-CULTURAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE TEACHING, TRAINING AND MENTORING SKILLS OF MILITARY TRANSITION TEAM ADVISORS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research Requirement:

The training role of military advisors is a key component of the overall long term strategy of military transition. Presently, U.S. advisors function as teachers, coaches, and mentors to host national militaries and police units in other countries. The advisors currently receive general cross-cultural training, yet Soldiers receive little to no training in specific teaching or advising skills, nor are they trained in how to apply these skills in a cross-cultural environment. In order for military advisors to teach, coach, and mentor their host national counterparts effectively the advisor must understand the role culture plays in teaching and learning, be able to modify their instructional strategies to accommodate cultural differences, and develop the skills necessary to assess and meet the needs of trainees in a variety of field-based settings.

Best practices for teaching are culture-bound — they exist within a specific cultural and historical framework. Thus, best practices for teaching in the United States are not necessarily best practices for teaching host nationals. In view of the current and future needs for military transition teams and skilled advisors in the Middle East, as well as the Horn of Africa, and southern Asian nations such as Afghanistan, this report focuses primarily on the cultures of these nations as examples, but provides a general framework for advising throughout the world. Differences and similarities in teaching and learning environments between the U.S. and Middle Eastern education systems are examined, and key cultural and teaching competencies necessary to teach and train effectively are identified. Recommendations include training in key areas such as the cross-cultural teaching/advising relationship, culturally relevant curriculum and methods, cross-cultural communication, and effective cross-cultural assessment.

Procedure:

This effort focused on identifying the individual advisor and counterpart differences, as well as the situational and cultural factors that impact the success and failure of training, coaching, and mentoring in cross-cultural situations. To identify these factors, literature was reviewed from a variety of areas, including academic and military publications, internet publications, and Congressional reports. The academic literature was drawn from the fields of cross-cultural and intercultural education, student motivation, international education, and general pedagogy.

Additionally, interviews were conducted with participants from four different populations: Soldiers from a variety of ranks who served as advisors in Iraq or Afghanistan; host nationals from the countries of Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa; host nationals who are subject matter experts in the area of cross-cultural education and training; and internationally known American subject matter experts in the area of cross-cultural education and training. The report also describes a conceptual framework for cross-cultural teaching and learning, and offers

recommendations for a curriculum to develop best teaching practices for advisors in cross-cultural environments.

Findings:

The literature review and iterative interviews led to the identification of two broad areas of proficiency necessary for Soldiers advising in cross-cultural environments: 1) intercultural competencies related to teaching and learning, and 2) effective cross-cultural teaching strategies. Advisors cannot be effective instructors without certain cross-cultural competencies, such as a basic understanding of the host culture, a minimum of language training and skill, and an understanding of cultural differences. The cultural differences that emerged most strongly from the data were an awareness of cultural dynamics such as relationship to time, relationship vs. task orientation, relationship to authority, face saving behavior, and cultural differences in communication patterns. Cross-cultural concepts such as face saving apply not only to day-to-day advising relationships, but are particularly important for the teaching and training process.

The literature review discusses five major themes for training Soldiers to be effective cross-cultural teachers and trainers: 1) understanding the influence of culture on teaching and learning, 2) development of the teaching/advising relationship, 3) motivating learners in a cross-cultural environment, 4) effective cross-cultural communication skills, and 5) methods for cross-cultural teaching and training.

Utilization and Dissemination of Findings:

Improved training for transition team advisors will result in more effective, efficient and safe training of host nationals, and help accomplish the U.S. military's broader goal of helping develop stability and security around the globe by empowering host nations to better police and patrol their own countries.

CROSS-CULTURAL STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE TEACHING, TRAINING, AND MENTORING SKILLS OF MILITARY TRANSITION TEAM ADVISORS

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INTRODUCTION

Ever since the end of World War II, American military officers have gone overseas in large numbers to give advice and training to the military personnel of developing countries. The demands of these missions, in many ways subtle or intangible, are quite exceptional. The advisor, or trainer, is called upon to set aside his usual operational procedures as staff officer, or commander, and to work in a strange setting outside the military organization to which he is accustomed.

- Dr. Edward C. Stewart, *Military Review*, February 1965, pp. 3-9.

Throughout history U.S. military advisors serving abroad have played a key role in training, coaching and host national police and military personnel. While Soldiers receive extensive technical training in military skills and theory, they receive little to no training on how to convey this information effectively to their counterparts in other cultures. Poor cross-cultural skills may not only undermine mission success but may sometimes “undo” accomplishments made by previous advisors. Military trainers and advisors provide a crucial link between host-nation forces and the forces, agencies, organizations, and institutions supporting the broader stability effort (Department of the Army, 2009). Improving cross-cultural competencies and methods used to convey information in cross-cultural interactions should improve the effectiveness and efficiency of military advising and help advisors better achieve the military’s broad goals of counterinsurgency and transition.

This report proposes a theoretical model for improving advisor training in two areas:

- 1) Cross-cultural competencies related to teaching and learning, and
- 2) Culturally responsive instructional strategies and methods.

These cross-cultural competencies and instructional strategies were gleaned from and developed through a comprehensive literature review and interviews with U.S. Army Soldiers, intercultural education and training experts, and host nationals from Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Horn of Africa. This document includes quotes from interviews which provide secondary evidence for findings of the literature review. Specific details about the interviewees and a summary of the interview findings can be found in the Methods section.

The primary mission of transition teams is to advise and train the security forces of host national countries in the areas of intelligence, communications, fire support, logistics, and infantry tactics (U.S. House of Representatives, 2007). Recently, transition team members are working with host national military and police forces such as the Iraqi Security Forces and the Afghan National Army. Advisors teach a variety of skills, such as setting up checkpoints, gathering and analyzing intelligence, organizing and running Army units, and conducting basic Soldiering skills such as operating artillery and reading maps. The goal is to enable host national forces to conduct independent military operations (U.S. House of Representatives, 2007).

The demands upon the advisor are many, as effective advising requires military skills as well as cultural and instructional competencies. Downs (1978) wrote that cross-cultural training

efforts in the U.S. military began in earnest during World War II. That time in America “marked the beginning of an awareness of the cultural dimension of international relations.... [T]he military trained many people in various languages and provided instruction on the cultures of foreign nations...” (p.89). Yet, cross-cultural training efforts are often inadequate. A 2007 Congressional Report stated, “While improvements have been made to the training, an even greater emphasis on language, culture, and advisor skills is needed” (U.S. House of Representatives, 2007, p.141).

The role of the advisor is crucial to the current strategic mission of the U.S. military and to worldwide counterinsurgency efforts (Department of the Army, 2006). As one Army Sergeant (Interview, 2008) who served two tours in Afghanistan as a transition team advisor from 2006-2008 stated, “Transition teams are our only viable exit strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan. We really are the ‘point of the spear’ of counterinsurgency.”

Teaching, Coaching, and the Advisor

The Department of the Army Field Manual 3-07.1 on Security Force Assistance (2009) states, “Advisors provide an expert opinion, advice, and counsel by focusing on both personal development (interpersonal and communication skills) and professional development (technical and tactical knowledge)” (Department of the Army, 2009). Advising includes two general categories of work with host national counterparts; direct skills instruction and training, and coaching. In the context of this paper, we use the definitions of teaching and coaching as outlined in the current Field Manual. The Field Manual describes teaching in the advisory capacity as “training and education...Methods of teaching can include classroom lectures, seminars, hands-on training, training exercises, and simulations” (p.7-27). Coaching is defined as “the function of helping someone through a set of tasks.... The coach and the person being coached discuss strengths, weaknesses, and a course of action to sustain or improve the goals” (p.7-27). We use the term *advising* as an inclusive term to refer to all of these functions.

Education and training are grounded in, and dependent upon, the act of teaching— both in the classroom as well as field-based and individualized contexts. The developmental psychologist Jean Piaget is credited with the phrase, “Teaching is not telling.” Effective teaching is much more than simply the giving of information. Among the skills and behaviors that good teachers engage in is the identification and selection of instructional strategies and approaches that best match the characteristics of the learner with the content or skills to be learned (Joyce, Weil, & Calhoun, 2004). Good teaching then considers:

- The strategies used to build trust and understanding between teacher and student
- The prior knowledge and learning experiences of the students
- The goals or objectives of instruction
- The instructional methods used to engage the student in the act of learning
- Assessment to determine if the desired objectives have been met

Inherent in this process is the important role that culture plays in the manner in which people are socialized to view others. This includes how they develop a worldview; the means by which they learn to communicate, interact and convey information to others; and how they go

about developing interpersonal relationships and the trust that underlies these critical relationships.

The Importance of Cross-Cultural Training

You end up protecting yourself more as an advisor and as a trusted member of the team if you understand where your counterparts are coming from. I look at that as a weapon, no different than if I was carrying my M9 and my M4. You arm yourself because you know what you're dealing with. That's probably about the best way I can end up putting it, arm yourself with information.

- A U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel, former MiTT advisor and veteran of two tours in Iraq (Interview, 2008)

The advisors we interviewed for this report spoke at length about the importance of cross-cultural preparation in accomplishing military objectives in host countries. Not only was an awareness of cultural norms important in establishing good will and relationships with host nationals, it was key to both personal survival and mission success. Without the skills necessary to develop rapport with and garner respect from host nationals, many advisors were able to accomplish very little (Ramsden-Zbylut, Metcalf, McGowan, Beemer, Vowels, & Brunner, 2008).

Currently, advisors receive cross-cultural training as part of their preparation for overseas deployment. The training includes lecture and PowerPoint presentations about cultural differences, lectures from host nationals and other U.S. Soldiers about cultural differences, cultural meals, as well as role-play simulations with host national role players and former advisors. In addition, Soldiers receive classroom language training as well as access to online language courses such as Tactical Iraqi.

Data gathered from Soldiers for this research effort demonstrate that while the Soldiers we interviewed felt satisfied with the amount of tactical training they had received; current cross-cultural training is still not meeting the stated needs of advisors. One Lieutenant Colonel stated, “I could shoot the eyes out of a gnat from 300 meters,” but described the cultural training as “hit or miss.” His sentiments about cultural preparation were echoed by nearly all of the Soldiers interviewed. Soldiers variously described the cross-cultural training as dated, ineffective, too academic, repetitious, too general, and often inaccurate (see also U.S. House of Representatives, 2007).

Soldiers reported they had little preparation specifically related to advisor skills, and no training in effective teaching and presentation skills. When asked what type of training they received in teaching and presenting, all of the Soldiers interviewed replied, “none” or “nonexistent.”

To support mission success and the broader goals of counterinsurgency, Soldiers serving as advisors need improved training in advising skills. While learning general cross-cultural skills is a good beginning, advisor training should include not only general cross-cultural

competencies, but those competencies *specifically related to teaching and learning*, as well as culturally responsive *instructional* strategies and methods.

THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON TEACHING AND LEARNING: LITERATURE REVIEW AND SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT INTERVIEWS

[M]ake an effort to understand the Iraqi Soldiers; cultivate a respect for their culture. Each American advisor starts with great credibility in terms of military expertise, and the Iraqis believe that we can do anything if we put our minds to it. With a measure of humility and cultural sensitivity, each adviser can use this perception to great advantage building the new Iraqi force (Grunow, 2006, p. 8).

It is the nature of culture that as people are socialized under common ecological and social pressures they acquire remarkably similar worldviews and adaptive behaviors. People who differ in their origins have cognitive and behavioral patterns that are also distinct, thus creating the potential for dissonance and conflict when they interact with each other. Cross-cultural researchers have investigated a number of important ways in which cultural differences influence values and behaviors across a variety of social groups. National culture provides one set of guidelines that influence the verbal and nonverbal communication patterns of individual group members. Culture also dictates acceptable social behavior as well as the cognitive processes which one uses to make sense of and engage with the world.

Much intercultural research has been applied to the fields of business, diplomacy, health, and education. Research is abundant with regards to teaching minority populations in classroom settings in Western nations. However, little research exists in the training literature that is specific to the needs of this initiative; that is, the preparation of Soldiers whose primary responsibility is to teach across significant cultural boundaries in challenging, *field-based* settings. To help address this need, we approached a few key leaders in the field of intercultural training and research for their guidance and direction. The experts consulted included:

- Mitch Hammer, Emeritus Professor of Intercultural Communication and Principal of the Hammer Consulting Group, which does extensive work on intercultural conflict.
- Janet Bennett, Executive Director and co-founder of the Intercultural Communication Institute, Portland, Oregon. Bennett has published several articles and chapters on intercultural theory and training in academic books and journals, and is co-editor of the 3rd edition of the *Handbook of Intercultural Training*.
- Milton J. Bennett, co-founder of the Intercultural Communication Institute and co-founder the Intercultural Development Research Institute in Milan, Italy, whose mission is to sponsor new theory and research in intercultural development. Bennett has been active in the intercultural field since 1967. Bennett and Hammer are well known for their work with the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI).

In a typical classroom setting, instruction can be delivered in more generic terms with a range of specific examples presented. In the field setting, instruction is typically more focused and specific. Milton Bennett acknowledged the unique instructional demands placed upon Soldiers in field-based settings when he stated, "Intercultural training techniques used in the classroom are pretty well known. But in the field, techniques need to be more responsive to the particular situation; more concrete, with a more inductive instructional style." Bennett was particularly sensitive to the need to motivate learners across the cultural divide, especially when comparing learners in a traditional classroom situation to those in the field. He warned, "In the classroom, people without previous training are more likely to 'know that they don't know,' and be relatively open to new learning. In the field, people with cross-cultural experience are more likely to be confident of their intercultural skills, even when that confidence is not particularly justified." (personal communication, November 15, 2008)

Janet Bennett helped focus attention on the relative lack of knowledge and experience most people have about culture and the particular predispositions of teachers who themselves may not be sensitive to the role culture may play in teaching and learning. She stated, "It involves extremely complex and layered thinking to prepare advisors who are not intercultural specialists, and who may not have previously been concerned about the role of culture in teaching and learning. When asked about the kind of problems they have encountered most advisors would not likely mention learning styles, culturally based communication styles, or cognitive styles as core concerns." (personal communication, January 7, 2009)

Mitch Hammer pointed out that instructional delivery methods should vary depending on the specific role of the host national trainee. For instance, host national officers, some of whom may have more formal education, may be more responsive and more familiar with formal classroom lectures than a relatively uneducated host national enlisted Soldier. He also stated it was important to focus on the "intercultural stress points" between U.S. Soldiers and host nation counterparts, and to examine what in the delivery of the training is problematic (for example, the challenges involved in moving training from the classroom to the field or the challenges in training officers together with enlisted Soldiers). Possible intercultural stress points that might be examined include social status hierarchy distinctions between trainer and trainee, dynamics related to high versus low context communication, and so forth. In addition, he stressed the importance of assessing the overall "cultural competence" of advisors. (personal communication, November 20, 2008)

In order to identify intercultural stress points, several frameworks for understanding cross-cultural interactions were examined, including the work of Hofstede (1980, 2001); Schwartz (1994, 1999); the GLOBE study (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004; Terlutter, Diehl, & Mueller, 2006); and Klein (2004). What follows is an examination of those frameworks and how they relate to teaching and learning in cross-cultural environments. Based on the military literature reviewed, as well as interviews with interculturalists and Soldiers, it was determined the most relevant cultural dimensions for teaching and learning as applied to a cross-cultural training environment for American military advisors in areas such as the Middle East, Afghanistan and Horn of Africa include:

- Power Distance (Hofstede; House et al.; Klein; Terlutter et al.);
- Individualism versus Collectivism (Hofstede; House et al.; Schwartz; Terlutter et al.);
- Achievement versus Relationship (Hofstede; Klein);
- Tolerance for Uncertainty (Hofstede; House et al.; Klein; Terlutter et al.);
- Time Horizon/Future Orientation (Hofstede; House et al.; Klein; Terlutter et al.); and
- Mastery versus Fatalism (Klein)

A summary of the major studies and the cultural dimensions most relevant to teaching and advising in the military are summarized below. A table summarizing these literature sources and the relevant dimensions is presented in Appendix A.

Cultural Dimensions

Hofstede is an influential Dutch writer on the interactions between national cultures and organizational cultures. He demonstrated there are national and regional cultural groupings that affect the behavior of societies and organizations, and these groupings are very persistent across time (1980, 2001). He conducted an extensive survey of how culture influences values in the workplace, analyzing data collected at first from approximately 115,000 middle managers of IBM in 50 countries, and later adding data from 23 additional countries. He initially identified four dimensions along which national cultures vary: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity–femininity, and individualism–collectivism, later adding a fifth, long-term orientation.

Schwartz (1994, 1999) compiled a set of cultural dimensions that were used to develop a framework of cultural values of 41 cultural groups in 38 nations. The framework included the dimensions of conservatism, intellectual autonomy, affective autonomy, hierarchy, egalitarianism, mastery, and harmony.

The GLOBE study (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program [House et al., 2004; Terlutter et al., 2006]) provides data on cultural variables based on a survey of 17,300 middle managers in 951 organizations in 3 industries (telecommunications, financial services, and food processing) representing 62 cultures. Data for the GLOBE study was collected after 1994, thus providing more recent information than that provided by Hofstede (1980). GLOBE reported on nine cultural dimensions (the first six of which are based on Hofstede's work) including assertiveness, uncertainty avoidance, power distance, collectivism I (institutional collectivism), collectivism II (in-group collectivism), gender egalitarianism, future-orientation, performance orientation, and humane orientation.

When people are socialized in differing cultural contexts, and hence in cognition, the behavioral and social context of cognition and the resulting views of the world may be different. This can result in dissonance and conflict during international interchanges such as multinational peacekeeping efforts, or in military settings where personnel attempt to collaborate on a common task. Klein's Cultural Lens Model (2004) provides a framework that captures group differences in how people view or filter their perceptions of the world. Unique to Klein is attention to cognitive behaviors that have direct application to work in complex natural and international settings such as the military. Klein's work on cross-cultural differences in cognition

help us better understand how cognitive behaviors can impact cross-cultural understanding.

The dimensions most relevant to teaching and advising in the military are summarized on the following pages, and a more concise summary of the dimensions and their influence on teaching and learning specifically in the Middle East can be found in Table 1 below.

Power Distance

Power distance (PD) refers to the degree to which a society accepts the idea that power is distributed unequally (Hofstede, 1980, 2001; House et al., 2004; Klein, 2004). Schwartz (1994, 1999) referred to a similar concept as hierarchy — an acceptance of unequal distribution of power, roles, and resources. The higher the country's ranking in power distance, the greater the likelihood power and wealth inequalities have been allowed to grow and be accepted within the society. The United States is a relatively low PD country, while Arab and East African nations tend to be much higher. Advisors from low PD nations who may be more comfortable with less-formal relationships may confront considerable obstacles when attempting to instruct those from high PD cultures who expect there to be significant distance between teacher and student. When differences in PD occur, time must be spent to define working relationships before the focus can shift to accomplishing goals (Klein). Advisors must also understand how culture has influenced the teacher/student roles in the country they are operating in.

Specifically, in high PD countries, learning tends to be characterized by teacher-centered education, in which the teacher transfers knowledge to students. Students are not expected to initiate communication or speak out unless called upon. In an instructional setting, trainees may not readily engage in dialogue. In addition, they may be reluctant to ask questions which may be perceived as an impolite criticism of authority. In light of the cultural effect of different power distances, the advisors we interviewed for this effort struggled with how to assess the effectiveness of their instruction. The Soldiers reported host national trainees rarely asked questions of the instructor during formal instruction, which led trainers to believe the trainees understood the material. However, this was often not the case and advisors had mistaken their counterparts' polite silence for understanding.

Individualism versus Collectivism

Individualism – Collectivism (IDV) refers to the degree to which a society reinforces individual or collective achievement and interpersonal relationships (Hofstede, 1980, 2001). People in individualistic societies are characterized by an emotional independence from “groups, organizations, and/or collectives” (Hofstede, 1980, p. 221), as opposed to those from collectivist societies “in which people are born into extended families or kinship systems that protect them in exchange for giving them loyalty to the collective” (Bhawuk & Triandis, 1996, p. 19). The higher the ranking on IDV, the greater the degree of individuality and individual rights exhibited within a society.

While there are certain to be variations within any one nation due to the various subcultures as well as individual differences that are present, Hofstede (1991) discovered that individualism and power distance, two separate conceptual dimensions, are correlated. That is,

countries high in individualism tend to be low in power distance, while those high in collectivism (low IDV) tend to be high in power distance. Individualistic, low power distance cultural patterns tend to be found in Northern American and Northern European regions, while collectivist, high power distance cultures tend to be found in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

In the educational context, teachers from high IDV societies tend to emphasize competition and openly praise successful students as “winners.” To prove themselves, students from high IDV societies strive for recognition through individual achievement and failure may lead to low self-esteem. In contrast, those from collectivist cultures have great respect for tradition. Individuals derive greater satisfaction from working with a group toward a collective goal than from their own individual successes. Students are expected not to draw attention to themselves in the classroom setting.

In an attempt to reduce the tendency to stand out from others, advisors working across the individual-collective divide should emphasize humility and modesty in their approach. Neither the teacher nor the student should be put in a situation where he or she might “lose face,” and should instead strive to resolve conflicts by compromise and negotiation. Given that individuals from collectivist societies have a strong connection to their family and community, advisors should stress how new information or skill development will improve the group’s quality of life or performance.

Achievement versus Relationship / Masculinity versus Femininity

Klein (2004) identified the achievement versus relationship factor as an important cross-cultural dimension. Achievement versus relationship is related to and evident in the amount of time people spend on tasks as opposed to developing and maintaining relationships. Thus, those high in achievement believe they can enhance change by having detailed plans, setting priorities, having target dates and making frequent reports. Relationship-oriented people tend to allow change to happen at its own pace, and it is usually unwise for others to try to enforce the rate of change. Hofstede (2001) characterized this cultural dimension as Masculinity/Femininity (MAS).

Advisors on transition teams in Iraq and Afghanistan were quite challenged by cultural differences in achievement versus relationship emphasis. As one former advisor reported, “While the U.S. Army’s reputation for being task-oriented is well earned and one of our greatest strengths, it becomes an impediment when the essential task is ceding mission accomplishment to the Iraqis” (Grunow, 2006, p. 16). U.S. Soldiers struggled to understand their counterparts’ perceived lack of task orientation. Soldiers were also frustrated by the host nationals’ tendency to place priority on family and personal obligations, as well as on activities that were perceived as “wasting time,” such as drinking tea, eating, and conversing. Soldiers also reported short training periods were the only effective method of training. Said one transition team member, a Captain who served as an advisor in Iraq, “If we could get them together for two or three hours at the most for training, we were doing good.” As transition team members spent more time in country, they came to realize that their counterparts valued relationships over task achievement.

Advisors working with relationship-oriented trainees should integrate interdependent, group-oriented instruction where possible, allowing for greater collaboration, mutual problem-solving and frequent interaction. Rewards should be group-focused (including family or clan) as opposed to individually-directed, reinforcing how newly attained knowledge will have a positive impact on the group. A more modest or relaxed approach to interaction, as opposed to a more direct and forceful instructional style, will facilitate relationship building between advisor and trainee.

Uncertainty Avoidance – Tolerance for Uncertainty or Ambiguity

Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) (Hofstede, 1980, 2001; House et al., 2004), also referred to as Tolerance for Uncertainty (TU) (Klein, 2004), refers to the degree to which a culture feels threatened by ambiguous situations. Ambiguity is avoided in a high UA culture by the creation of laws and rules, as well as the refusal to tolerate deviance. A low UA/high TU ranking indicates the culture is less concerned about ambiguity and uncertainty, presumably having a greater tolerance for a variety of opinions and behavior. People in such a society tend to be less rule-bound, are more flexible and accepting of change, and take more risks.

Former U.S. Army advisors reported that they were often challenged by their counterparts' resistance to change. Host nationals often used military procedures that had not changed in many years. In Afghanistan, host national senior officers were often reluctant to change time-honored procedures regardless of their effectiveness. One U.S. Army Soldier who served as an advisor in Afghanistan in 2007 stated, "They [host nationals] really want our help, but they have a hard time doing things differently."

Relationship to Time /Long-Term Orientation

In their later work, Hofstede and Bond (1988) identified a fifth cultural dimension, Long-Term Orientation (LTO). LTO refers to the degree to which a society embraces traditional values. A high LTO ranking indicates the society prescribes to the values of long-term commitments and respect for tradition. A low LTO ranking indicates the society does not reinforce the concept of long-term, traditional orientation. House et al. (2004) labeled a similar dimension *future-orientation*, the degree to which members of a society engage in such behaviors as planning, investing, and delaying gratification. Klein (2004) referred to it as *time horizon*, describing how far in advance people will set goals and justify their actions.

While no data are available for the Arab nations on LTO, the advisors we spoke to who had deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan were often frustrated at their counterparts' resistance to planning. Advisors would schedule classes and training well in advance, only to discover their host national counterparts failed to attend and had chosen instead to do other activities. Grunow, (2006) called this "reacting versus planning." He wrote, "Failing to plan does not necessarily mean laziness. It just means that Iraqis prefer to 'react to contact' and make things happen when they have to" (Grunow, 2006). Differences in Long Term Orientation (LTO) among U.S. Soldiers and host national counterparts can potentially cause frustration and misunderstanding.

Feghali (1997) also characterized members of Arab countries' relationship to time as "polychronic." She wrote, "relational development and maintenance" is more important than "adherence to schedules, clocks or calendars" (p. 366).

Mastery versus Fatalism

The earliest work on the cultural dimension of Mastery versus Fatalism was conducted by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961). In their studies of various cultures, they noticed that some groups accommodated to external events that controlled their lives in the world, while others seemed driven to master them. They termed this Mastery versus Fatalism. According to research, North Americans and most Western Europeans demonstrate a mastery orientation, while Arabs tend to be more fatalistic (Klein & Kuperman, 2008; Lane, DiStefano, & Maznevski, 1996; Nydell, 2002; Schwartz, 1994, 1999; Triandis, 1971).

Klein and Kuperman, (2008) write,

In the Middle East, planning discussions are regularly punctuated by *Inshallah*—"if Allah wills it." The status of a person's health, wealth, and safety are believed to be inevitable. Arabs tend to invoke luck and conspiracy theories instead of expecting human actions to make a difference. Interviewees reported, "We don't plan ahead," "We only act when a catastrophe happens," and "If it's going to come, then it will come." While educated Arabs show less fatalism, they are still typically more fatalistic than Westerners (Nydell, 2002). Westerners generally believe that they can master most barriers with adequate resources and hard work (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961).

People with a mastery orientation are less likely to accept events as beyond their control. Those with a fatalistic orientation tend to accept that external factors control their lives—they are more likely to accept and adapt to a situation than to seek to solve a problem (Klein 2004; Klein & Kuperman, 2008). This can pose challenges for military activity, especially if it influences how people respond to threat. At times, fatalistic people may be reluctant to plan for crises and this reluctance may be perceived by those with a mastery orientation as a lack of concern for personal safety (Klein; Klein & Kuperman). Advisors reported that perceived fatalism in host nationals was often frustrating and sometimes confusing. One advisor went to Iraq to teach field medic skills and first aid, and met with resistance from his host national counterparts. He felt that fatalism, as evidenced in the use of "*Insh'allah*" ("as God wills it") undermined his training efforts. He reported many of his counterparts could not see the use of trying to save someone's life if God had willed them to die.

Again, Table 1 below describes the influence of the cultural dimensions on teaching and learning specifically in the Middle East as an example of how advisors could use the information to plan and provide more effective teaching and training events.

Table 1.

The Influence of Cultural Dimensions on Teaching and Learning in the Middle East

Dimension	Implications for Teaching and Learning (U.S. Advisor with Middle Eastern Counterpart)
Power Distance	Provide greater teacher-centered instruction. Trainees may not initiate or readily engage in dialogue. Training may be facilitated by high-status instructors (senior staff, commanders, officers, etc.). Instructors may have to assume role of authority figure, especially to reduce ambiguity of role relationship.
Individualism/Collectivism	Focus on the group; work toward group goals and provide group rewards; show value new learning has to the group. Demonstrate respect for tradition, elders, community; also demonstrate humility and modesty. Single out individual trainees as little as possible; maintain face-saving as much as possible.
Uncertainty Avoidance	Provide highly-structured learning environment with logical flow to instruction. As risk-taking tends to be limited, use lecture, modeling and coaching, with little independent problem-solving. Provide examples of how others have been successful and applied new knowledge. Focus on compliance with procedures. Have clear expectations for assignments and assessment methods.
Masculinity/Femininity Task vs. Relationship	Emphasize interdependence; use group-oriented instruction allowing for collaboration and frequent interaction where possible. Use group-oriented rewards. Use modest, relaxed approach to instruction.
Mastery vs. Fatalism	A mastery-oriented advisor with a more fatalistic trainee might suggest that while Allah's plan will always be done, one's individual actions might serve to facilitate Allah's will. Therefore, the idea that one's own efforts can make a difference could be introduced and promoted.

Summary

In order for military advisors to be more effective and efficient trainers and coaches, they must possess both cross-cultural and instructional competencies. Understanding cultural dimensions helps shed light on the impact of culture in the advising and training process. Knowledge of individual and group differences in relation to time orientation, power distance, and other dimensions can help U.S. Soldiers develop better cross cultural instructional strategies, and engage in more effective teaching and training of host nationals. In the next section we will examine the teaching and learning methods and strategies for different cultures.

TEACHING AND LEARNING ACROSS CULTURES

The history of Islamic education in the Middle East has been described by contemporary scholars as one of “rich, diverse and sometimes original pedagogical tradition” (Kadi & Billeh, 2007, p.12). However, the host national counterparts with which U.S. advisors work generally come from education systems that have seen radical changes in modern times. Most educational systems in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Horn of Africa countries are currently based on hierarchical teaching models, and use memorization, lecture, and repetition as primary teaching modalities (Boyle, 2007; Kadi & Billeh). In contrast, the American participants we interviewed experienced the U.S. educational system as less hierarchical, more student-centered, activity-based and flexible than their Arab and Middle Eastern counterparts. Boyle (2007) contends Islamic schools and American schools differ fundamentally in their approach to knowledge acquisition. She writes “Islamic schools (predominant in the Middle East, Arab, and Horn of Africa nations) begin with a narrow educational focus (the Koran) and gradually broaden over time. In the U.S., schooling begins with a broad range of general subjects in elementary school and becomes more specialized as students progress through high school and college” (p. 179). A summary of the key differences in Middle Eastern/Arab and American schooling is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Key Differences in Middle Eastern/Arab and American Schooling

<p>Middle Eastern Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rich, thousand-year-old tradition of effective pedagogy based on memorization, repetition and discussion• Contemporary schools based on direct instruction and teacher-centered learning• High respect for education, teachers, and texts• Variable literacy rates with some countries high in illiteracy• Students approach content from specific to general (Boyle, 2007)
<p>U.S. Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• History of free, public education, based on lecture and teacher-centered learning• Modern history of school reform challenging teacher-centered methods• Contemporary history of blended methods of direct instruction and student participation through class discussion, group work, projects, Socratic method• More informal relationships between teachers and students• Generally high literacy rates• Students approach content from general to specific (Boyle, 2007)

Soldiers in cross-cultural teaching and training environments are faced with a variety of challenges, including working with a host national population whose approach to learning and educational experiences may be very different from their own. Shamin (1996), in discussing her experiences teaching across cultures, described an example of traditional teaching in Pakistan: “The learners are passive listeners with virtually no opportunities to become active participants in the teaching/learning process. During a lecture the learners religiously note down every word of the lecture (or as much as they can) to faithfully reproduce it in examinations” (p. 106). Her attempts at employing less-teacher-centered instructional approaches, such as group work and independent learning failed, with students resisting both directly (by complaining) and indirectly (by missing classes). Out of frustration, as exam time neared she found herself assuming a more teacher-centered, authoritative instructional style, which made the students happier and more relaxed.

Shamin’s experience highlights the fact that strategies that are generally successful in U.S. schools, such as group work, class discussion, and independent learning, may *not* be the best strategies to use with host nationals. Many of the Soldiers we interviewed reported that host national trainees generally did not respond to their initial efforts to have class discussions and large group interaction. The host nationals with formal education were most likely exposed to an education system in which they were respectful listeners rather than what Westerners perceive to be “active” participants.

Teaching in a culturally responsive manner means understanding that a range of cultures intersect in most educational settings. To effectively reach students or trainees across this cultural divide requires changes in the way instructors develop rapport and interact with their students, how the curriculum is conceived, and the manner in which it is taught. Instructional methods should support the learning approaches of the students, with *their* cultural characteristics providing the measure for determining which instructional strategies are employed, *not those deemed comfortable and familiar by the trainer*.

U.S. Soldiers and host nationals may approach their collaborative activity from entirely different orientations, have a significantly different understanding of the task at hand and an entirely different sense of its application, and employ disparate ways of communicating this to one another.

In addition to understanding the ways in which culture impacts approaches to learning, advisors also need to understand how to build trust and motivation in cross-cultural training and coaching environments. These skills are necessary for classroom and field instruction, as well as one-on-one interactions with host national counterparts. Understanding trust and motivation are necessary for all aspects of the advising role.

Building Motivation Across Cultures

[T]he act of motivating students, singly or in groups, demands that you understand and connect with their feelings, concerns, values, experiences and unmet needs (McCarty & Siccone, 2001, p. 23).

Motivation creates a desire to learn and to engage with the material being presented. Data gathered for this effort reveal developing motivation in host national countries consists of four important factors:

- 1) Building trusting cross-cultural relationships;
- 2) Identifying local needs and tailoring advising to meet those needs;
- 3) Using culturally relevant examples; and
- 4) Understanding communication differences.

Western theories of motivation typically draw upon Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1970), Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman's Two-Factor Theory (1959), or McClelland and Johnson's Motivation Theory (1984). These theories emphasize masculinity, Protestant work ethic, individualism, low power distance, and a high tolerance for uncertainty, and seem to work best in individualistic, masculine, and mastery-oriented societies. They may not transfer well into the "language" of collectivist or fatalistic cultures.

For instance, Maslow (1970), suggested people in Western nations are motivated to satisfy their needs in the following order: physiological needs, safety and security, belonging, achievement, esteem, and finally, self actualization. Studies undertaken in East Asia, in contrast, suggest the hierarchy of needs is somewhat different, with the most important being belonging, followed by physiological needs, safety, and then self-actualization in the service of society. Esteem is not even a factor (Nevis, 1983).

As we have seen, collectivist cultures such as those in Arab, Horn of Africa, and Middle Eastern countries exhibit high power distance and a low tolerance for uncertainty. Thus, building trusting relationships in host national countries is a different process than in the U.S. Advisors working in host national countries *cannot assume* Maslow's and other hierarchies of need, based on Western cultures, hold true in these regions. Host nationals, subject matter experts, and U.S. Soldiers agree meeting local needs for basic services and safety is key to mission success; however, for host nationals, building a trusting relationship is a prerequisite to meeting those needs.

Building Trusting Relationships

Trust, meaning one's willingness to be vulnerable to another in situations that involve risk, is essential among multicultural military teams and must be in place before any real work or progress can occur. The more individualistic Americans compared to their collective Middle Eastern counterparts tend to assume other people can be trusted until proven otherwise. While there are exceptions to this basic rule (e.g., strained race relations), individuals who do not know one another generally assume they both have positive intentions (Fukuyama, 1996; Lewis, 2006).

In many other parts of the world, the level of trust outside of one's in-group (i.e., family, close friends, and members of one's ethnic group) is not nearly as common and therefore Soldiers must take the time to get to know their counterparts. Relaxed social interaction and general conversation may appear to military advisors to delay the progress of their goals. However, the experience of trainers who have been most successful in these regions clearly

demonstrates the benefits of developing a trusting relationship (Ramsden-Zbylut, Metcalf, McGowan et al., 2008) in the initial stages of interaction.

Advisors wishing to build strong relationships in Arab and many African countries should also understand some of the characteristics of local culture and communication preferences. In discussing trainer and trainee relationships between Iraqis and Americans, Faiz Al-Alawy, a visiting Iraqi Professor of Technology at Kent State University, reiterated the importance of developing a personal relationship between advisor and trainee. One common problem associated with the use of new teaching technologies (e.g., PowerPoint), he suggested, is its reliance on a visual interface that may further distance Western advisors and trainees from traditionally non-literate, relationship-oriented societies. Reliance on technology may inadvertently communicate the instruction has been pre-planned and scripted, thus preventing the instructor from being personal and responsive to the individual (Al-Alawy, interview, October 30, 2008).

Tangible Benefits Based on Local Needs

McCarty and Siccone (2001) claim motivation occurs when learners can clearly assess the *benefits* of the teaching or training. They wrote in order for teaching to be effective, instructors must:

- Make the benefits *explicit* — State clearly the purpose of the lesson and what is to be gained;
- Make some of the benefits *immediate* — Provide students with opportunities to experience success and satisfaction right away;
- Make the benefits *inherent* in the participation of the activity — Make activities interesting and engaging;
- Make the benefits *intrinsic* — Construct lessons that acknowledge the interests of the students (pp.98-99).

This framework for motivating learner's echoed statements made about motivation by SMEs as well as U.S. Soldiers. To build true motivation and make training effective, Soldiers need to assess local needs and make the benefits of training explicit, immediate, inherent, and intrinsic. In addition, trainees bring with them a considerable amount of knowledge and skill related to the region and its culture(s). This expertise should be acknowledged, recognized, and built upon. Effective advisors need to establish ways of assessing their trainee's prior knowledge, therefore validating their particular expertise and building motivation.

Successfully motivating host national trainees also requires a pre-training assessment of local needs and levels of education. As Michael Fleming, an American trainer with extensive experience training host nationals stated, "When training, you have to ask yourself, 'Is the curriculum you have of value to the people you're training?' The biggest mistake is to assume, 'yes' without further inquiry" (interview, 2008). Soldiers often begin advising situations with high expectations for advisees, only to find the curriculum they are teaching is irrelevant to or too advanced for the needs of the host nationals. For example, one Soldier we interviewed went to Afghanistan to teach artillery to the Afghan National Army. Once there, he realized most of

the Afghan Soldiers did not possess the basic math skills necessary for artillery calculations. He improvised and first taught a basic math class. He also developed motivation among his advisees by using Afghan numbers at first, and then transitioning to Western numbers. By using the Afghan number system the Soldier also helped to increase the motivation of his trainees by using culturally relevant examples, which will be examined in more detail in the following section.

Using Culturally Relevant Examples

The effectiveness of using culturally relevant examples in training Soldiers in Afghanistan was also outlined in an article by Tucker (2008) in which he wrote,

One of the training techniques that we use to establish a connection with our Afghan Soldier students is the use of Afghan history and how that history relates to training and the Afghan Security Forces.... We also use the example of Achmed Shah Durranni; he was a warrior king, poet and administrative genius who rose from the rank of personal servant to king of an empire.... As we progress we sometimes also mention several other key historical people. Secondly, we use these examples to establish a common link of understanding and to attempt to establish a bond — a bond between people and Soldiers — who have a similar bond and history and share adversity, education, arts, and growth with all its values and spirit (pp.29-30).

Subject matter experts with expertise in cross-cultural education and training also spoke about the importance of using culturally relevant examples in order to build motivation and “buy in” when training. Trainer Michael Fleming (interview, 2008) shared how he used to use a picture of a Ford truck to teach a principle about safety when training in the U.S. When he went to the Middle East, he was surprised by how trainees reacted to the slide. One said, “Oh, you Americans think everything has to be American.” When he changed the slide to a Toyota truck, the distraction was removed and trainees in host countries no longer mentioned it. Even a culturally relevant change as simple as this one helped the training go more smoothly, and showed sensitivity for local norms.

Other culturally relevant examples may include recognizing and acknowledging the role and former historical significance of Arab culture. For example, a trainer/coach may acknowledge the exceptional educational institutions that existed prior to Saddam’s regime in Iraq, the importance of the new-found wealth in the region (primarily due to oil), and/or the rapid growth of Islam in many nations around the world (including the United States).

Communication Differences and Language Barriers

The understanding of language is an important factor in building relationships across cultures. In the military context, *interpreters* fill a critical role in the interaction between the advisor and their counterpart. Interpreters working with U.S. Soldiers serve as an important link by conveying not only language, but cultural perceptions and realities. Major Genter states in *Working with Transition Team Interpreters* (2008) it is important to have local national interpreters working on transition teams as they are better able to connect with the local

population and are closer to understanding the intricacies of a culture. He writes the interpreter must have:

...a thorough comprehension of national history, religious customs, tribal relations, local politics and personalities of local ‘spheres of influence.’ Insights to such complex relations and individual narrations only can be accomplished by time and exposure to the indigenous people and their customs (p. 32).

Interpreting language is more than a technical capability. Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (2006) suggests interpreters should be native speakers of a language or dialect and “[t]heir speech, background, and mannerisms should be completely acceptable to the target audience...” (p. C-2) so the interpreter can discreetly interact with their military counterparts and fellow host nationals.

A Soldier must ensure the interpreter is accurately translating and the target audience understands what is being said. Jandt (2001) identifies *experiential equivalence* as being one of the potential barriers in intercultural communication. He writes, “If an object or experience does not exist in your culture, it is difficult to translate words referring to that object or experience into that language when no words may exist for them” (p. 150). However, Soldiers can verify meaning where possible and adapt accordingly. One technique for this is “back translation” where they reflect back to the other party what that party has said (p. 151). They can do this by translating back from English to the original language and back again into English. Back interpretation/translation is best used when trust is established between the interpreter and Soldier. There is no way of ensuring accuracy *with or without* back translation; therefore, a Soldier should use whatever strategies he or she knows to attempt to improve the reliability of the translation. In other words, back translation is better than no checks at all and is most effective when trust has been well-established.

Language capabilities and translation problems during advising can also be compounded by a lack of English fluency on the part of the interpreter. FM 3-24 (Department of the Army, 2006) suggests analyzing how well an interpreter speaks English and also how well they are understood. “As a rule, if the interpreter understands the speaker and the speaker understands the interpreter, then the interpreter’s command of English is satisfactory” (p. C-2).

Many other American interpreting agencies also make suggestions about how to work effectively with an interpreter.

- 1) **Message delivery.** The Soldier clearly states how messages should be conveyed by the interpreter.
- 2) **Interpreter briefings/debriefings.** The Soldier briefs the interpreter on what the training, interview or interrogation will consist of. Soldiers debrief to ensure accuracy of the translation and discussion of concerns.
- 3) **Pauses.** These should be observed frequently by the Soldier in order to allow for the most accurate, detailed translation.
- 4) **Interpreter-Counterpart protocol.** Soldiers should always directly engage their counterpart while speaking through an interpreter. Furthermore, it is important for the interpreter to understand they must refrain from interjecting their opinions or

taking charge of a situation (Genter, 2008). Their role is to relay information from the Soldier to the target audience.

- 5) **Use of humor.** FM 3-24 (Department of the Army, 2006) advises against using humor because it may not translate correctly for counterparts. But humor can also lighten serious situations and serve as an effective tool (Genter, 2008). Advisors must use caution and determine if humor can be used appropriately in training or coaching situation. The effective use of humor in cross-cultural situations can be very difficult, and may cause offense.
- 6) **Time management.** Soldiers must remember that while working with interpreters, interviews and/or interrogations require double or triple the amount of time (Department of the Army, 2004, p. B-4).
- 7) **Teamwork.** Soldiers should treat interpreters as part of the team. The interpreter should also be included in mission preparation and know proper roles and action during battle drills (Department of the Army, 2004, p. B-2; Genter, p. 33).
- 8) **Rapport.** Soldiers should learn about their host country and demonstrate concern for the interpreters' family and well-being (Department of the Army, 2004, p. B-3).

Much insight has been gained and emphasis given to the fact that interpreting is not mechanically translating from one language to another. The role of the interpreter should include several aspects: linguistic skills, social/cultural comprehension, and also the ability to be a good team member. Genter (2008) writes without the host national interpreters, “the transition team mission...would certainly fail...” (p. 33). Interpreters play a key role in the advisor/counterpart relationship. Thus, it is important to ensure the proper selection of an interpreter, recognize their inherent worth, and follow simple suggestions for interpreter/Soldier interactions.

Language differences and translation challenges are an obvious impediment to effective communication and trust building in the advising relationship, and can create many misunderstandings in multinational/multicultural teams. Less obvious is the relationship of more subtle patterns of communication across cultures. Certain characteristics of Arab verbal communication — *repetition, indirectness, elaborateness, and affectiveness* (referring to one's use of affect) — are significant in the context of military transition teams' teaching and training strategies (Feghali, 1997).

Repetition of pious expressions, including *Insh'allah* (“if God wills it” or “God willing”) is frequent among Arabic speakers. According to studies by Wolfson (1981) and Berque (1978), the fact members of Arab societies tend to use a considerable number of proverbs and ritualistic phrases to praise others indicates *repetition is at the very heart* of the language and discourse (Feghali, 1997, p. 356). U.S. Soldiers frequently cited frustration with this aspect of language use among counterparts. Advisees often asked trainers to repeat certain information over and over, which sometimes resulted in misperceptions of the intelligence of counterparts. Soldiers also did not understand why counterparts often repeated information and key phrases.

Understanding the importance of repetition also has an impact on teaching and learning strategies. Boyle (2007) indicated Koranic schools throughout the Middle East and Horn of Africa use repetition as an essential element of pedagogy. Traditional Islamic schooling relies on repetition and memorization to build foundational learning skills. Conscious incorporation of

repetition by U.S. advisors into teaching and training may result in more effective conveyance of information to counterparts.

Indirectness, often associated with Hall's (1959) concept of high versus low context communication, is characteristic of Arabic speakers. While low-context communicators (e.g., U.S. nationals) typically express their ideas or thoughts in a straightforward manner even if the content may be harsh or critical, high-context speakers may appear to conceal their true wants, needs, or goals. This may be evident when an individual responds in an agreeable or pleasant manner when direct or factual answers might prove embarrassing or distressing. The true intent is communicated in the context of the message —by nonverbal expressions, tonality of voice, etc. — subtleties that are not immediately evident to low-context speakers (Feghali, 1997). This characteristic can make teaching quite challenging for advisors. Understanding the concept of indirect communication can help U.S. military advisors present material more effectively, allow them to give better instructional feedback to counterparts, and lessen the chance of misunderstanding and conflict.

Elaborateness refers to the rich and expressive use of language. Native Arabic speakers may use substantially more words to communicate verbally than do speakers of other languages (Feghali, 1997), with some researchers suggesting that an Arabic speaker would take 100 words to communicate what their U. S. counterpart could say in ten (Samover & Porter, 1991). This means while Arabs may over-assert or exaggerate in order not to be misunderstood, non-Arabic speakers may misunderstand this and assume the message has greater importance than it really does. On the other hand, U.S. English speakers may not be given much credence by Arabic speakers because their message may be perceived as brief and unimportant.

Affectiveness, or the “intuitive-affective style of emotional appeal” (Glenn, Witmeyer, & Stevenson, 1977) is key to the manner in which ideas are organized and presented. In the Arabic context, it is the presentation of the idea *and* the person making the argument. In this context, repetition, phrasing, and passion are more influential than the logical structure and flow typically followed by U.S. presenters (Feghali, 1997).

Finally, a range of para-linguistics or vocalizations may also impact how something is said, and thus interpreted. Loudness, which to Arabs may connote strength and sincerity, may be viewed as objectionable or obnoxious to an outsider. Thus, when communicating in English, for instance, the intonation used in Arabic may sound accusatory to the English speaker; or higher pitch and emotion might be perceived as threatening or aggressive (Feghali, 1997).

Summary

The literature review for this research effort examined key dynamics of culturally responsive teaching, including key cultural dimensions that influence teaching and learning, the effective use of interpreters, motivating host national counterparts, and the subtleties of Arab communication patterns. We will continue our exploration of culturally responsive teaching and learning by examining the data from interviews with U.S. Soldiers, host nationals, and subject matter experts, and examine how the data points to best practices for preparing transition team advisors to effectively train, advise, and coach host national counterparts.

METHODS

Research for this effort focused on identifying individual advisor and counterpart differences, as well as the situational and cultural factors that impact the success and failure of training and coaching. Researchers interviewed participants from four categories, including:

- U.S. Army Soldiers who had served as advisors in Iraq and/or Afghanistan;
- U.S. interculturalists with expertise in cross-cultural training and/or education;
- Host national experts in the areas of cross-cultural training, communication, and education (host national subject matter experts); and
- Host nationals from Iraq, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and other Middle Eastern and Arab countries.

The number of interviewees and their associated backgrounds is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Interview Participants' Demographics

<p>U.S. SOLDIERS — Former Army Transition Team Members (20) (Ranking from Sergeant to Colonel) Small group interviews – (8 – two groups of 4) Individual interviews – (12)</p>	<p>SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS - U.S. (9) Intercultural Experts (4) Cross-Cultural Training Experts (4) Education/Curriculum Experts (1)</p>
<p>HOST NATIONALS — (10) From Afghanistan (3), Iraq (1), Jordan (1), Senegal (1), Democratic Republic of Congo (1), Saudi Arabia (1), Liberia (1), and Yemen (1)</p>	<p>SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS —Host National - (8) Educators and Education/Training Experts from Iraq(3), Egypt (2), Somalia (2) and Afghanistan (1)</p>

Audio interviews were recorded and transcribed for all participants. The interview population is discussed in more detail below and all the interview protocols are presented in Appendix C. Statements followed by probes to draw out responses were also used. All the interview questions can be found in Appendix C.

U.S. Soldier Interviews

Two types of interviews were conducted with U.S. Soldiers: small group interviews (in person) and individual telephone interviews. Group interviews included members of a ten-member Military transition team (MiTT) who had been deployed to Iraq and who were interviewed in two groups at Fort Riley, Kansas. Each group interview lasted approximately one hour. Soldiers in the group interviews were not self-selected; participation in the group interview

was scheduled as one of their final post-deployment activities before returning home. Of this group, two team members were interviewed individually, and two group interviews were conducted with four Soldiers per group, respectively.

Individual telephone interviews were also conducted with 20 Soldiers from the U.S. Army who were former active duty and reserve TT members. Soldiers were self-selected, and their participation was solicited by e-mail. An e-mail invitation along with the questionnaire was sent to the AKO e-mail addresses of 100 former transition team members, of which ten indicated their willingness to participate. Table 4 presents the Soldiers' demographic information.

Table 4
U.S. Soldier Interviewee Demographic Information

Group Interviews: All served in Iraq

Rank	Role on MiTT	Age	Yrs of Service	Education
CPT	Intelligence Officer	27	6	BA
CPT	Team XO	28	6	BA
CPT	Asst. Team Chief	27	5	BA
CPT	Logistics Advisor	28	10	BA
MSG	NCOIC	43	24	High School
MSG	E-8 Team NCOIC	39	18	HS + 2 yrs college
SFC	Comm. Advisor	29	8	BA
SSG	S-4 OPS NCO	35	14.5	High School
SSG	Medic	38	15	HS + 2 yrs college
SSG	OPS NCO	35	17	High School

Individual Interviews: 7 Soldiers served in Iraq, 3 Soldiers served in Afghanistan

Rank	Role on MiTT	Age	Yrs of Service	Education
COL	Division Advisor	50	28	MS
LTC	Brigade Chief	43	20	MA
LTC	Battalion Chief	41	18	MA
MAJ	TT Battalion Leader	33	11	MA
MAJ	Team Chief	34	11.5	MS
CPT	Artillery/Fires&Effects Ofc/OPS Ofc	28	8	BA
CPT	S-2 Intel OIC	30	5	BS
SFC	NCOIC, ETT/ PMT	46	26	HS + some college
SGM	Command SGM	48	25	HS
CPT	Senior Artillery Mentor	28	5.5	BA

Soldiers were asked questions related to four main themes: their educational experiences, advising preparation, advising experiences, and advice for effective advising in-theater. Probes were open-ended and designed to indirectly reveal cultural thinking differences between Soldiers

and their host national counterparts. For example, one typical question was, “What do advisors need to know about Iraqi or Afghan culture, **in terms of teaching and learning** that will help them to be more effective advisors?” Statements followed by probes to draw out responses were also used. All the interview questions can be found in Appendix C.

Subject Matter Expert Interviews

U.S. intercultural experts, such as Janet Bennett, Milton Bennett, and Mitch Hammer, were chosen for their expertise and professional reputations; they are widely published and well known in their fields. U.S. and European training experts were chosen for their extensive experience training and teaching host nationals in international settings around the world including Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Nigeria, West Africa, Gambia, Egypt, Somalia, Somaliland, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Guinea, Haiti, Latin America, the Caribbean, Qatar, South Africa, Mauritius, India, and Pakistan. A comprehensive list of the subject matter experts and their backgrounds is included in Appendix B.

Interviews with subject matter experts from Iraq, Egypt, Somalia and Afghanistan were conducted by telephone with additional follow up e-mails to clarify information or verify accuracy of quoted statements. Two of the 15 interviews were conducted by e-mail, with participants responding electronically rather than orally. All SME telephone interviews were recorded with permission and transcribed. SMEs were asked questions like:

- What have been your experiences as a cross-cultural educator/trainer?
- What are your ideas about cross-cultural and other theories of education and how might they inform this project?
- How can advisors develop successful cross-cultural working relationships?
- What do advisors need to know about Middle Eastern and Horn of Africa culture (particularly Iraqi or Afghani culture, or the culture the SME was familiar with), **in terms of teaching and learning**, that will help them to be more effective advisors ?

Host national SMEs were also asked to describe the educational systems of their native country. The interview questions for the subject matter expert interviews can be found in Appendix C.

Host National Interviews

Data was collected from host nationals through e-mail and phone interviews. The host nationals we interviewed included an Afghan interpreter currently embedded with an Army MiTT in Afghanistan, an Afghan national who is an educational trainer and program developer in Afghanistan, an Iraqi interpreter currently residing in the United States, a Middle Eastern educator currently working as a cultural awareness trainer for the U.S. military, an Afghan national working in the U.S. in the field of education, and several students from countries such as Jordan and Yemen who are currently studying in the United States. Host national participants were asked to talk about their educational experiences and the education systems in their home countries. Other questions asked include:

- How do you learn best, both today as an adult as well as when you were a child?
- What are your recent advising and training experiences with American Soldiers in Iraq or Afghanistan? (asked to the host nationals in the military)

The full set of interview questions for the host national individuals can be found in Appendix C.

REPORT OF FINDINGS

In this section we report on the interview data gathered from the participants over a three-month period. Though we need to verify the findings with a larger sample of host national counterparts, both U.S. Soldiers and host nationals stated a preference for activity-based, interactive learning. Though the education systems of the U.S. and countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq differ dramatically, subject matter experts, host nationals, and Soldiers reported that for them, best practices for teaching and training included four key components:

- 1) A strong teacher/student relationship;
- 2) Interactive, hands-on teaching methods;
- 3) Co-teaching with host nationals; and,
- 4) Effectively checking for understanding and giving feedback to counterparts.

U.S. Army Soldiers' Educational Experiences

The Soldiers we interviewed reported experiencing a typical diversity of U.S. public education, and had experienced teaching methods consisting primarily of lecture, class discussion, and small group work. Two participants went to private schools and were exposed to more student-centered learning and creative exploration such as the Socratic method and experiential, project-based curriculum.

The vast majority of the Army participants we interviewed favored participatory learning, whether it was teaching themselves new things as adults, or being taught by others. While some spoke of the importance of theory or “the big picture,” 18 of 20 said theory alone or independent reading and research was not how they learned best. As one stated, “Some theory is okay, but keep it to about 10%.” One Sergeant said, “You do need to read and understand broad concepts, like understanding the nature of the war we’re in. History and context are important.” A few mentioned they liked to first read about a new subject and then “try it out,” but most said they most enjoyed learning by doing.

Soldiers also spoke about independent learning and interactive discussion methods. These tended to be Soldiers with education beyond a high school or college degree. One Soldier, who is currently pursuing PhD studies, said that while he learns well through the Socratic method he was exposed to in Catholic school (he also mentioned seminar and discussion methods), he felt that he learned best through “hands-on methods.”

Soldiers also reported their own military training consisted primarily of lecture and PowerPoint demonstrations, and that this was an ineffective way for them to learn. More effective were the hands-on activities such as Leader Meets and other role-play scenarios.

Subject Matter Expert Perspectives on Host National Teaching and Learning

I would say that to characterize the post-colonial [Arab] educational system, it is generally very hierarchical, fairly bureaucratic, and often very focused on form and less on content. ...the systems were not set up to really encourage innovation and creativity or to encourage a lot of variation from the norm.

- Interview with Helen Boyle, Arab Education Expert, 2008

As discussed previously in this report, Arab education systems tend to be based on memorization, hierarchy, and teacher-centered learning with little in-class interaction on the part of the learner. Teachers initiate nearly all communication in class (Baron, 2008; Hofstede, 2001). In spite of the differences in educational history and systems of formal schooling, the host nationals we spoke to reported their preferred way to learn and be trained was through hands-on, interactive methods.

While the subject matter experts and host nationals we interviewed spoke about the differences in American and Middle Eastern systems, they also emphasized the importance of interactive learning when training host nationals. The host nationals also echoed the views of the subject matter experts. One Senegalese Soldier, who served with American forces for several years, said, “Demonstration works best A short lecture followed by a lot of practice, hands-on...using scenarios sometimes.” What he considered the least effective way of teaching and training was “Long lectures... one-way talk.”

None of the subject matter experts recommended training based primarily on didactic or lecture-based instruction. Helen Boyle, an expert in Arab and Islamic education stated in a 2008 interview,

I think all training activities need to be highly participatory. It is not as important to give people the theory as it is to make them do things. Exploring through ... role plays, dramatizations, all of these... are good techniques.

Michael Fleming, an American with 10 years of experience as a trainer in Arab as well as other Middle Eastern countries, agreed. He said, “Everything needs to be activity based” (interview, 2008). Petr Zemanek, a Croatian trainer who has delivered approximately 100 technical courses in the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Mauritius, said the people he has trained “learn mostly by examples from real life. When training, I would limit the theory to [the] absolute minimum. [It’s] better to learn by example (10% theory, 90% examples)” (interview, 2008).

The subject matter experts and host nationals we interviewed agreed that in spite of the predominance of lecture and memorization as the central methodology for Arab and Middle Eastern education, these methods should *not* be the core methods for training counterparts. Individual preferences for training will always be present, and some host national and American learners will prefer self-study and independent learning, but interviewees’ comments point to the

importance of building curricula for both U.S. Soldiers and host nationals based on interactive, rather than didactic methods.

One important caveat when discussing interactive learning in host national countries is the use of discussion-based methods in Middle Eastern, Afghanistan, and Horn of Africa countries. Hofstede (1986) and others (Baron, 2008; Boyle, 2007) note that differences in power distance or hierarchy (Schwartz, 1999) influenced dynamics in the cross-cultural classroom or training situation. As discussed earlier in this report, strategies that are generally successful in U.S. schools, such as class discussion, may *not* be the best strategies to use with host nationals. Cultural norms such as respect for teachers and face-saving behavior may prevent trainees from participating in group discussions, at least until a trusting relationship has developed between the instructor and the learners.

The Importance of Building Relationships

No amount of resources and firepower can compensate for the lack of a relationship between advisors and their counterparts. It must be honest, genuine, and heartfelt. Mutual respect, trust, and understanding create success. (Department of the Army, 2009, p.7-2).

Previous sections of this report note that building relationships is an essential factor for developing motivation in host national trainees. The American Soldiers we interviewed described good teaching as interactive, participatory, and hands-on and good teachers as those who kept them engaged through meaningful activity. In contrast, host nationals and host national teaching experts emphasized *relationships* as a key factor in successful teaching. When asked about his favorite teacher, one Afghan interpreter, age 25, who had served with American troops for four years, described his teachers as “Very good, until the civil war. I was a captain in the class, and when teachers didn’t come to school, I would teach. Education is very important in our country, but they don’t take care of schools.” He also emphasized the teacher’s relationship with the students and said,

I loved the guy. He joked with us, he taught us nice, he was strict but good behavior with students. We liked him. He respects everybody, each other. [sic] In Afghanistan, some people don’t respect each other.

These comments echo some of the emerging themes about education in the Middle East, Arab, and Horn of Africa countries brought up by the host national subject matter experts in education and training, such as the importance of relationships, and what Zaharna (2009, in press) terms an “associative view of communication,” based on context more than content. The Senegalese Soldier also emphasized the importance of relationships in effective teaching, and a focus on group rather than individual achievement. In this quote he describes an American advisor’s teaching: “Nobody was left behind; we all came up as a team. The small group instructor was skilled enough to create a good class dynamic resulting in a mass graduation by the end of the course.”

The Importance of Storytelling

The concept of *elaborateness*, the rich and expressive use of language found in Arab communication patterns (Feghali, 1997), is discussed in the literature. Both the host nationals and host national education experts we spoke to indicated the importance of storytelling when teaching and training in the Middle East as well. Storytelling is often cited as an important element of both Muslim religious education as well as secular education in many parts of the Arab world (Zaharna, 2009 in press). The Senegalese Soldier said, “In Africa, the parents usually like to tell stories to the kids and have them draw the conclusions or the morality related to the story.” The Afghan interpreter stated that in terms of primary methods used by his teachers, what was effective for him was storytelling. Several subject matter experts also spoke about the importance of storytelling when instructing host nationals. Tamer Ali, a U.S. citizen of Afghan heritage who owns a company that provides teaching and training in Afghanistan said during our interview,

Having an American instructor stand in front of a class of educationally immature natives will not yield positive results. Role playing, story-telling, and a high level of interaction and involvement by native instructors will be more effective. So one must default to some trial and error and be open to very basic forms of imparting education like storytelling (interview, 2009).

Trainer Michael Fleming said storytelling was key to teaching safety principles related to physical performance of tasks in Arab and Middle Eastern countries, and that “people all over the world respond better to stories than to monologue instruction alone” (interview, 2008). An African educational system expert, who directs education programs and projects in the Horn of Africa, West Africa, and the Gambia, and has designed education projects and worked with Ministries of Education in Egypt, Somalia, Somaliland, Ethiopia, Guinea, Haiti, and Columbia spoke extensively about the importance of storytelling and the oral tradition in Somalia.

One of the skills they [Somali children] have which is extraordinary is the ability to memorize. A child can recite a poem for 10-15 minutes. So, memorization is not always what you are going for, but it is a skill that comes in very handy and you sometimes need. So, certainly in our programs, [it's important to base] the educational programs on that aspect of the culture, on traditional stories (interview, 2009).

The Importance of Host Nationals as Co-Instructors

Subject matter experts emphasized the importance of having host nationals act as co-teachers and trainers whenever possible. Having the support of local elders or educated community members can sometimes make or break a training opportunity. For example, Michael Fleming described a training scenario in North Africa that was rescued from disaster by the support of a local elder.

I was just starting to teach a workshop about safety, and one of the men in the class said that incidents and accidents aren't preventable, that they were God's will, “*Insh'allah*.” Luckily, a respected elder was there and he raised his hand and everyone went silent.

He said that the Koran says that if you have scientific knowledge of hazards and you can prevent harm to your fellow man from that knowledge, then Allah requires you to do that. There was some discussion among the participants, then we went ahead with the training. I'm convinced that without his comment, that training would not have happened (interview, 2008).

As Tamer Ali said, "Please consider that a native counterpart should always be part of this [in country] training. A Soldier will buy in more if a local or citizen is helping them learn" (interview, 2008). The Afghan Interpreter echoed this sentiment, and said, "The best way to do that [train Afghans] is to find educated guys [Afghans] to teach skills. [The] best way is to hire an Afghan teacher to educate them."

The concept of co-teaching with host nationals is supported by the history of Koranic schools in the Middle East, in which older students are expected to teach and mentor younger students (Boyle, 2007). As the Afghan interpreter brought up earlier, as a child he was the "Captain," of his class, and was expected to teach the class when the instructor was absent. An anonymous Islamic education expert described this model of Koranic Education as an "indigenous cascade model" of instruction, and stated, "I think Somalis really appreciate it if you recognize the benefits of those models" (interview, 2008).

Checking for Understanding/Face Saving

Something that gets to a lot of people is that they will tell an Afghan something, and the Afghan will tell you something then it'll be a lie. You ask, "You understand?" "Yeah I understand." But then they'll do something completely wrong. The biggest thing is maybe checking comprehension. You have to ask a specific question that they will get wrong unless they actually understand. You'd do a class and they'd be nodding along the whole time, making good eye contact then I say, "Okay if the air pressure was 675, you know, how far would that make a round land short?" They're like, "I have no idea. What's air pressure?"

- U.S Army Captain who served as an advisor in Afghanistan from 2007-2008

The quote above illustrates the importance of understanding the concepts of face saving and checking for understanding in a cross-cultural teaching or training environment. Getting feedback during training is a challenge for U.S. advisors unfamiliar with Arab and Middle Eastern classroom communication norms. U.S. Soldiers may interpret their counterparts' answers about understanding the material to be "lies," when counterparts are instead either being polite or saving face in front of their peers. Face-saving behavior, previously identified as part of the cultural dimension of collectivism (Hofstede, 2001; Schwartz, 1999) can be a powerful classroom and training dynamic in Arab, Horn of Africa, and other Middle Eastern cultures. As Mackey (1987) describes, "One's honor determines one's image. The key to saving face is the assiduous avoidance of shame" (p. 125). Patai (1983) echoes this sentiment, and relates the concept of collectivism to both hospitality and honor (pp. 7-13).

Because of this dynamic, the subject matter experts we interviewed agreed Soldiers need to check for understanding from host national trainees in *indirect* rather than direct ways. Shane Carlson, a computer systems trainer in the Middle East, Africa, and Pakistan stated because of the culture of saving face in the Middle East, questions delivered to the class in general will probably not get answers, “because no one wants to be wrong in front of everybody” (interview, 2008). Carlson suggested getting feedback during breaks when you can casually approach one person at a time, as students will not ask questions in front of the group. Michael Fleming emphasized the importance of asking open-ended questions in order to check for understanding. He said, “Americans are seen as experts when they teach abroad, and trainees will say ‘yes’ to a question in order to save face. If you ask, ‘Did you do this?’ and they say, ‘Yes’ when they didn’t, the American perceive that as a lie” (interview, 2008). A more productive approach is to ask a question about how they will (or did) perform a task and explore the context of their response with supportive coaching.

The subject matter experts we interviewed also suggested using hands-on methods to assess understanding, such as asking members of the group to demonstrate their understanding by drawing or working with materials. However, any method of checking for understanding must allow the trainees to save face and avoid embarrassment. One host national educator who works as a trainer with the U.S. military suggested beginning by focusing on what students or trainees *understand*, rather than what they do not understand, in order to assess learning. He stated,

It is important not to embarrass the student in front of the class and alienate him by showing that he is different. For example, I can tell the student, “I know you are interested in the subject. Why don’t we talk about that more after the class?” You see, that is one situation. Another situation, you tell him, “You know, I noticed that you are not getting the information. Let’s meet after the class.” The second scenario is not acceptable. The first scenario is more appropriate.

He explained that after the initial discussion of the student’s interests, the instructor could then discreetly check for understanding and help the student better understand the material.

Understanding the Need for a “Dual” Curriculum

The first day of the training the Mongolian OIC [Officer in Charge] tried to kick several of my best trained FDC [Fire Direction Center] personnel out of his class because they were enlisted, insisting that only officers could compute firing data (a legacy of the Soviet control of Mongolia)... We had tried in vain to teach simple tasks to some of our officers that the Soldiers picked up immediately. I convinced him to give my Soldiers a chance to demonstrate the skills they already possessed doing math and plotting points, and he was impressed enough to keep them. They became some of the best students, often serving as demonstrators for the officers from other brigades.

- U.S. Army Captain and Senior Artillery Mentor in Afghanistan, 2007–2008

In many host national armies, history, tradition, and culture serve to create a clear separation between high and lower ranking Soldiers. In order to respect the local culture and to advise effectively, Soldiers reported it was often important to train and advise host national Soldiers and officers *separately*. Therefore, advisors need to be able to teach a “dual” curriculum with host national counterparts. For example, one MiTT commander had his U.S. Soldiers build a firing range for the Iraqi officers in order to train M-16 skills. When the officers had finished being trained, the U.S. commander asked if the Iraqi enlisted Soldiers might use the range to train on the new weapons. His Iraqi counterpart agreed, and the Iraqi enlisted Soldiers were trained separately on the same firing range. Understanding the concept of dual curriculum and training is essential for successful cross-cultural advising and training.

Structural Challenges to Effective Advising

Effective advisors are only the most capable individuals. Advisors are Soldiers known to take the initiative and who set the standards for others; however, they are also patient and personable enough to work effectively with FSF. Recognizing that not all Soldiers are capable of performing as advisors, leaders should immediately remove advisors who do not exhibit these qualities (Department of the Army, 2009, p.7-3).

While the selection and deployment of advisors is not the primary focus of this research, Soldier data from interviews and a review of the military literature (Downs, 1978; Grunow, 2006; Stewart, 1965; Turner, 2007; U.S. House of Representatives, 2007) revealed several structural challenges that impact advising. The following is a presentation of the relevant themes that emerged from the data though it should be noted historically these same themes have been documented before regarding previous advisory missions (Ramsey, 2006). The challenges identified include the need for better screening and selection of advisors, more overlap time between incoming and outgoing teams, and the need for more professional incentives for transition team members.

The Soldiers we interviewed recommended the changes to address structural challenges which are presented in the following paragraphs.

Advisors should volunteer, not be “volun-told”; the best advisors are the ones who want to be there. Soldiers reported that those who did not want to be on a MiTT were largely ineffective. One Captain stated, “The guys who didn’t want to be there either skated along, or sometimes did more harm than good.” However, even in the case where an initial selection screening is not possible ARI is in the process of developing algorithms and decision tools for composing effective teams (Donsbach, et al., 2009). Utilizing the transition teams at Fort Riley, KS as a test-bed, the initial work has involved gathering the personal history, traits and abilities of team members as they first arrive at training. Performance data in the form of proficiency in tactical and non-tactical areas and in team dynamics is then gathered when the teams finish their training at Fort Riley, and then again when they return from deployment. By examining the performance data in relation to the composition of the teams the intent is to make recommendations for optimal team composition for future teams.

Advisors should be screened before being assigned to a transition team and not just assigned due to military skills or expertise. Ramsey’s (2006) investigation of the advisory

missions in Korea, Vietnam, and El Salvador led him to conclude understanding the host nation culture and language and having strong interpersonal skills were more important than the Soldier's technical and tactical abilities. Current research also contends that advising requires a range of interpersonal skills in order to be effective (Ramsden-Zblylut, et al., 2008). Fundamentally, advisor work appears to require a different set of traits and qualities which are typically not reflected in a traditional command position (Fox & Stowell, 2008; Ryan, 2008) and as one Soldier stated, "The best officer is not the best advisor. It's not a job for the spit and polish kind of person."

There should be more overlap time between incoming and outgoing transition teams in-country in order to share lessons learned. Many Soldiers reported there was little to no "right seat/left seat" transition time in-country, and many never spoke to the Soldiers they were replacing in-country; nor were Soldiers given the opportunity to train or orient teams that were replacing them. They felt many valuable lessons learned were lost due to a lack of transition time. Soldiers who did have time to share or receive lessons learned cited this process as crucial to their success in country. At present, measures are being taken by the Army to improve communication between incoming and outgoing teams through the Transition Team Forum part of the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS), an Army-only internet discussion site, as well as by connecting through a website set up specifically for their team. Currently, 3,100 Soldiers are using the Forum to post briefs, share information, and discuss the challenges of advising.

Soldiers should receive professional incentives for being on a transition team. One former advisor commented, "Being a MiTT advisor is not exactly a good career move." The lack of tangible professional rewards becomes a disincentive and may discourage the most talented and skilled Soldiers from volunteering for transition team duty (Fox & Stowell, 2008). Investigating and addressing these structural challenges may help improve the overall effectiveness and success of the advising mission.

Thus far we have examined the cultural dimensions of training for military advisors serving on transition teams. We now turn to a discussion of possible methods of training advisors for these cross-cultural situations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING

The goals of cross-cultural training are to impact the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of individuals as they prepare to interact across cultures (Brislin, 1981; Gudykunst, Guzley, & Hammer, 1996). More specifically, cross-cultural training aims to help reduce the stress people experience when they interact across cultures; help people to communicate more effectively in both verbal and non-verbal modes; assist them in developing essential interpersonal relationships, both to facilitate their primary objectives of the interchange as well as to their own sense of comfort and belonging; and learn how to learn in a new cultural setting (Brislin; Winslow, Kammhuber, & Soeters, 2004).

Cross-cultural training methods can be categorized in two ways: according to their processes, either didactic or experiential; or by their content, being culture-general or culture-

specific (Bhawuk, 1990; Brislin, 1981). One of the most common mistakes made in intercultural training is the tendency to rely on one dimension to the exclusion of the other: didactic *or* experiential, general *or* specific (Fowler & Blohm, 2004). Effective cross-cultural training integrates a variety of methodologies. A categorization of major training strategies can be found in Table 5.

Table 5
Cross-Cultural Training Strategies

	Didactic	Experiential
Culture-general	Lecture, books, film Self-awareness and values clarification Culture-general assimilator	Simulations (e.g., Bafa-Bafa, Barnga, Ecotonos) Field-trips to culturally-different domestic settings
Culture-specific	Lecture, books, film Host-national speakers/interviews Culture-specific assimilators/case studies Computer-generated media	Role plays/simulations Demonstrations followed by practice Laboratories (language, skill practice and development)

Didactic approaches focus on providing a cognitive understanding of either culture-general concepts (e.g., cross-cultural adjustment, the process of categorization), or culture-specific information about a particular target culture. The most often-used approach in cross-cultural training remains the didactic approach (through lecture). Films and videos offer an alternative to the lecture method and have the advantage of bringing visual representations of real-life scenarios into training while appealing to a wide range of learning preferences. However, there is little evidence to support the claim that by simply providing cognitive information, the overall goals of training are attained (Cushner & Brislin, 1996).

Cognitive approaches that *engage the affect*, however, do offer some advantage. Critical incidents and case studies, for instance, provide an approach that effectively engages the emotions while transmitting a significant amount of useful information about either a target culture or critical cultural-general concepts. Critical incidents are most often packaged and available in the form of culture assimilators or intercultural sensitizers. These consist of short stories or brief vignettes that bring attention to potential culture clashes and significant aspects of a particular target culture in an engaging cognitive manner (Albert, 1983; Cushner & Landis, 1996). Of all the cross-cultural training strategies that have been developed, the culture assimilator has undergone the most rigorous assessment and has proven to have impact in the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains (Brislin & Yoshida, 1994; Cushner & Brislin, 1996; Cushner & Landis). Research has shown that culture assimilators are capable of transferring a significant amount of useful culture-specific or culture-general information and result in a reduction in the use of stereotypes. Individuals trained with cultural assimilators, as well as their hosts, report enjoying their intercultural experience more and feeling more positive about others; and trained individuals are more productive in working with people from cultures other than their own.

It may be less important, however, to determine the relative effectiveness of any particular approach to cross-cultural training than it is to implement a variety of strategies that address varying training objectives appropriate for the particular target group (Gudykunst, et al., 1996).

A Model Military Training Program

Winslow et al. (2004) developed an intercultural training program for the German Armed Forces that, unlike traditional cognitive or behavioral approaches, was based on theories of situated learning, where learning is perceived to result from a transactional relationship between activity, context, and culture (Lave, 1988; Lave & Wenger, 1990). Winslow et al.'s approach to the development of intercultural learning environments in the military draws attention to a number of factors, including:

- *The separation of knowledge and experience.* Trainees, if provided with cognitive information alone, have no direct experience with the target culture. Thus, they interpret reality using their own culturally-specific, and oftentimes inaccurate, framework, resulting in an expectation that is likely to be disconfirmed (Cushner & Brislin, 1996).
- *Lack of subject reference to the object of learning.* Among the primary goals of cross-cultural training are for trainees to acquire the curiosity, desire, and conceptual understanding that will enable them to continue to inquire and learn about intercultural concerns outside of the classroom and in real life. The alternative is they will become defensive and revert to their comfortable and familiar way of confronting difference.
- *Dysfunctional epistemological convictions.* All learning is embedded within a cultural and situational context. When trainees learn or memorize “rules of behavior,” this can trivialize cultural learning, especially since the topic is then seen as finite. According to situated learning theories, models and concepts are seen as conceptual tools that serve as a means to an end, not the end itself.

The design criteria above were incorporated into an intercultural toolkit that built upon “Intercultural Anchored Inquiry” (Kammhuber, 2000; Winslow et al., 2004), an application of the anchored inquiry method developed by the Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt (1997). The cornerstone of anchored inquiry is the development of videotaped authentic and complex problems that are relevant to trainees. The situations presented have no obvious resolution, and end in a manner that provokes the need for further learning on the part of the trainee.

The intercultural toolkit consists of three parts: a handbook covering core concepts of intercultural psychology; a culture-general assimilator modified from Cushner and Brislin (1996); and a set of live action incidents presented via a CD-ROM. The modified culture-general assimilator, using themes from Hofstede (1980), Hall (1966), and Cushner and Brislin, moves beyond the cognitive emphasis of most assimilators by asking trainees to propose alternative behavioral responses to each incident. The trainees then evaluate behavioral options regarding both positive and negative consequences.

Winslow et al. (2004) wrote the development of powerful, situated learning environments should consider the following design criteria:

- *Learning from authentic and relevant problem situations.* Use of authentically-derived critical incidents rather than invented ones sharpens trainees' perceptions of culture-specific norms and constraints in a given context. As far as possible, incidents should reflect the complex nature of real-life situations, with learners first defining what the core problem is and what data are relevant for possible solutions. If critical incidents are too short or too straightforward, trainees are deprived of a very important part of this real-life task.
- *Integration of multiple perspectives.* According to the underpinnings of situated learning, "truth" is acquired through a negotiation of meaning. Therefore, one requirement for developing flexibility of knowledge is to scrutinize a problem from multiple perspectives. Critical incidents in such settings can be analyzed from cultural, political, military, medical, legal, and other perspectives. Emerging alternatives for action are more likely to be adaptive when considered from multiple perspectives.
- *Reflection as a core concept.* Considering multiple perspectives requires a discourse-based learning environment. This has implications for military education, which is traditionally characterized by lecture and passive listening.

This model military training program provides insight into important aspects to consider when designing training for military advisors. In the next section, we examine the importance of integrated, long term learning when designing curriculum for advisors.

The Importance of Integrated, Long-Term Learning

The professional development literature in education suggests short-term, one-session seminars, workshops, and lectures continue to be the mainstay of cross-cultural instruction, especially when it comes to enhancing the pedagogical practice of most teachers (Smith & Gillespie, 2007). While this approach offers some benefits (e.g., such sessions are easily planned and delivered), research suggests they are not effective at bringing about the desired changes in teacher behavior. In one study of teachers attending a 6-day workshop on "effective teaching," teachers implemented only 3 out of 18 concepts and strategies introduced in the workshop, and never substantially changed their existing beliefs and practices (Gardner, 1996).

In a related study, Joyce et al. (1993) found that K–12 teachers, even with extensive training, adopted only 10% of the practices presented in professional development courses, unless the training was followed by coaching or action research. The key to successful change lies with sustained coaching and practice, as exemplified in the findings of greater self-efficacy among pre-service teachers when they have more time to practice their craft in a real classroom (Albion, 2001). In a phenomenon known as the spacing effect, researchers have consistently shown distributing the time needed to study over several sessions, as opposed to massing the same amount of time into one session, results in increased retention of knowledge (Willingham, 2002).

Similarly, conversations held at the outset of this research with intercultural leaders (Hammer, J. Bennett, and M. Bennett) echo the notion that a “one-shot” cross-cultural training course, without follow-on reinforcement, will do little to make lasting change. This is reinforced in the intercultural literature that suggests significant culture learning is a process that requires long-term exposure impacting the behavioral as well as affective domains (Cushner, 2007; Cushner & Brislin, 1996; Merryfield, 2000).

It is not difficult to see why a single, stand-alone course is still the model of choice in most institutions, including the Army; it can provide an overview of basic cross-cultural teaching strategies and cultural competencies as well as provide practice of the new knowledge and skills. This by itself is a worthy goal. However, few Soldiers left on their own will make meaningful links between what they learned stateside and what they are experiencing in the field. Simply put, one course on cross-cultural teaching methods will not be effective in producing lasting learning.

It is recommended that an integrated model which allows Soldiers additional time to absorb, reflect on, and connect with the content, as well as be supported in-theatre is needed. Distance learning technology, coupled with the latest understandings of how this technology can be used to promote intercultural learning, has prompted great change in how the Army can prepare its Soldiers (Advanced Distributed Learning: SCORM).

The following chart outlines a “blended” model of training (see Figure 1) where instruction is delivered in a stand-alone course. In this model, the stand-alone course is supported by a virtual classroom where a Soldier can revisit skills and teaching methods multiple times and in multiple ways once in-theatre.

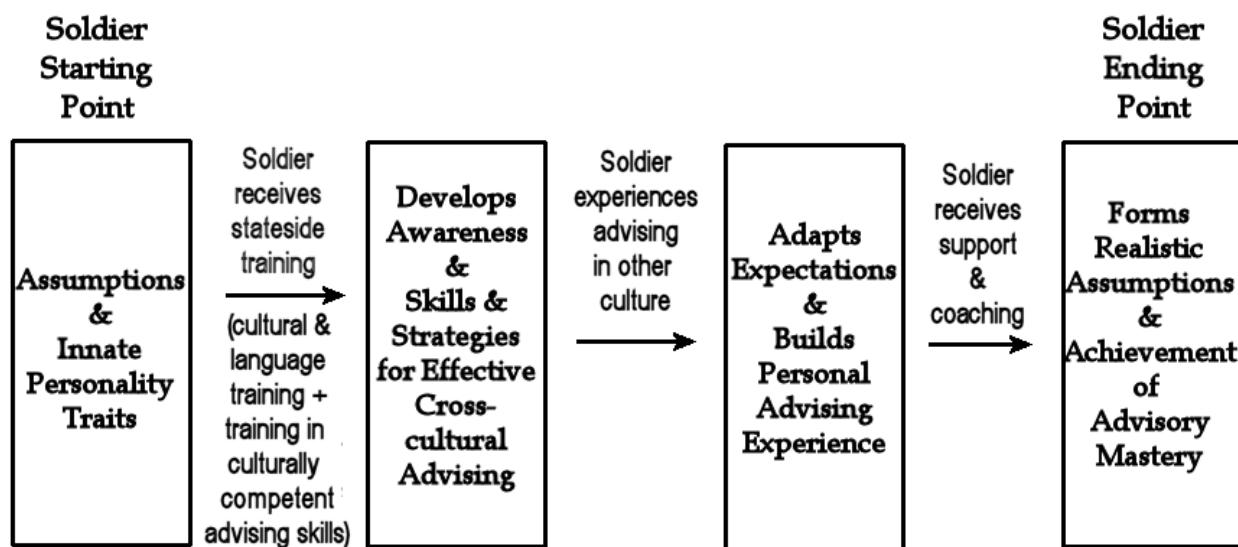


Figure 1. Dynamics of a blended model of training

The literature review, as well as qualitative data from subject matter experts, host nationals, and Soldiers serves as a foundation for informing best practice for training transition team advisors to train their host national counterparts. The following recommendations for best practices are offered in two categories: scope of content and method of delivery.

BEST PRACTICES FOR TRAINING U.S. TRANSITION TEAM ADVISORS

Scope of Content

- 1) The training content should address advising (teaching, coaching, and advising) within a cross-cultural context. The training should focus on teaching and advising skills through the lens of cultural competence. All discussion of teaching methods and strategies should be embedded within a cross-cultural context, with attention paid to similarities and differences between host national and U.S. Soldiers.
- 2) The training should address host national counterpart learning style differences. The training should teach Soldiers about the learning styles and educational preferences of host national counterparts as well as their own, taking into account individual learner differences and differences in educational experiences.
- 3) The training curriculum should prepare U.S. Soldiers to teach in classroom *and* field settings. According to situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991), training is most effective when situated within the actual context of the activity being taught. Military transition team's function in a variety of field-based situations, and advisors should be prepared with methods and strategies for teaching in a variety of environments, both inside and outside the classroom.
- 4) The training should include knowledge of cross-cultural communication skills that relate to teaching. In addition to basic language training and instruction on using interpreters, Soldiers should be taught the more subtle aspects of communication relevant to the cross-cultural teaching and training environment. Concepts such as indirect versus direct communication, giving feedback in a cross-cultural environment, and effectively assessing understanding of counterparts should be included.
- 5) The training should include knowledge of strategies for developing separate curricula for host national officers and host national enlisted Soldiers. The data reveals high ranking officers in Iraqi and Afghan armies are not accustomed to receiving training alongside their enlisted counterparts. Rather, advisors usually coach high-ranking counterparts one-on-one, and conduct formal and informal instruction with enlisted host national Soldiers in groups either in classroom or field settings. The curriculum should provide a solid foundation of training and resources for developing “dual” curricula.

Content Delivery

- 1) The training U.S. advisors receive should implement a variety of learning strategies that address varying training objectives (e.g., critical incidents, direct instruction, critique and reflection on teaching/learning scenarios). All content should be contextualized. The literature and data above suggest the use of relevant critical incidents should be the predominant method of curriculum delivery in the blended system.

- 2) Training should be interactive and hands-on. Soldiers should be trained using methods that match their preference for interactive, hands-on learning.
- 3) The training should follow the principles of distributed learning. Distributed learning is an instructional model that allows instructor, students, and content to be located in different, non-centralized locations so instruction and learning occur independent of time and place (Saltzberg & Polyson, 1995). The distributed learning model can be used in combination with traditional classroom-based courses as well as with traditional distance learning courses, or it can be used to create wholly virtual classrooms. Best training practice would contain multiple methods and technologies and include stand-alone components amenable to delivery via CD-ROM or web technology.
- 4) The training should include ongoing, in-country support. Ongoing support is critical for the success and effectiveness of new teachers (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 2000). The curriculum should include a database for Soldiers to utilize in-country, into which they can input a challenge or problem and get immediate help and feedback about next steps and strategies for effective advising and instruction, as well as practice teaching techniques “virtually” in a non-threatening, low risk environment.
- 5) Training should be evaluated for effectiveness. The goal of the training curriculum is to develop TT members’ abilities to train host nationals in-theatre. The success of the curriculum as a whole depends upon whether individual Soldiers demonstrate improvement in both intercultural competencies and cross-cultural teaching strategies as described throughout this document. Knowledge-based as well as skills-based assessment that is carried out in both formative and summative ways is essential to assure teams are actually able to apply their newly acquired skills. These assessments should provide regular, consistent feedback that will allow for the identification of struggling Soldiers, make remediation possible, and provide an overall evaluation of the training program.

The proposed culturally responsive curriculum is embedded within a framework of the cultural dimensions relevant to teaching and learning as shown conceptually in Figure 2 below. As shown Soldiers will progress through a curriculum that encompasses four areas of best practice, including relationship building, communication differences, instructional strategies, and checking for understanding.

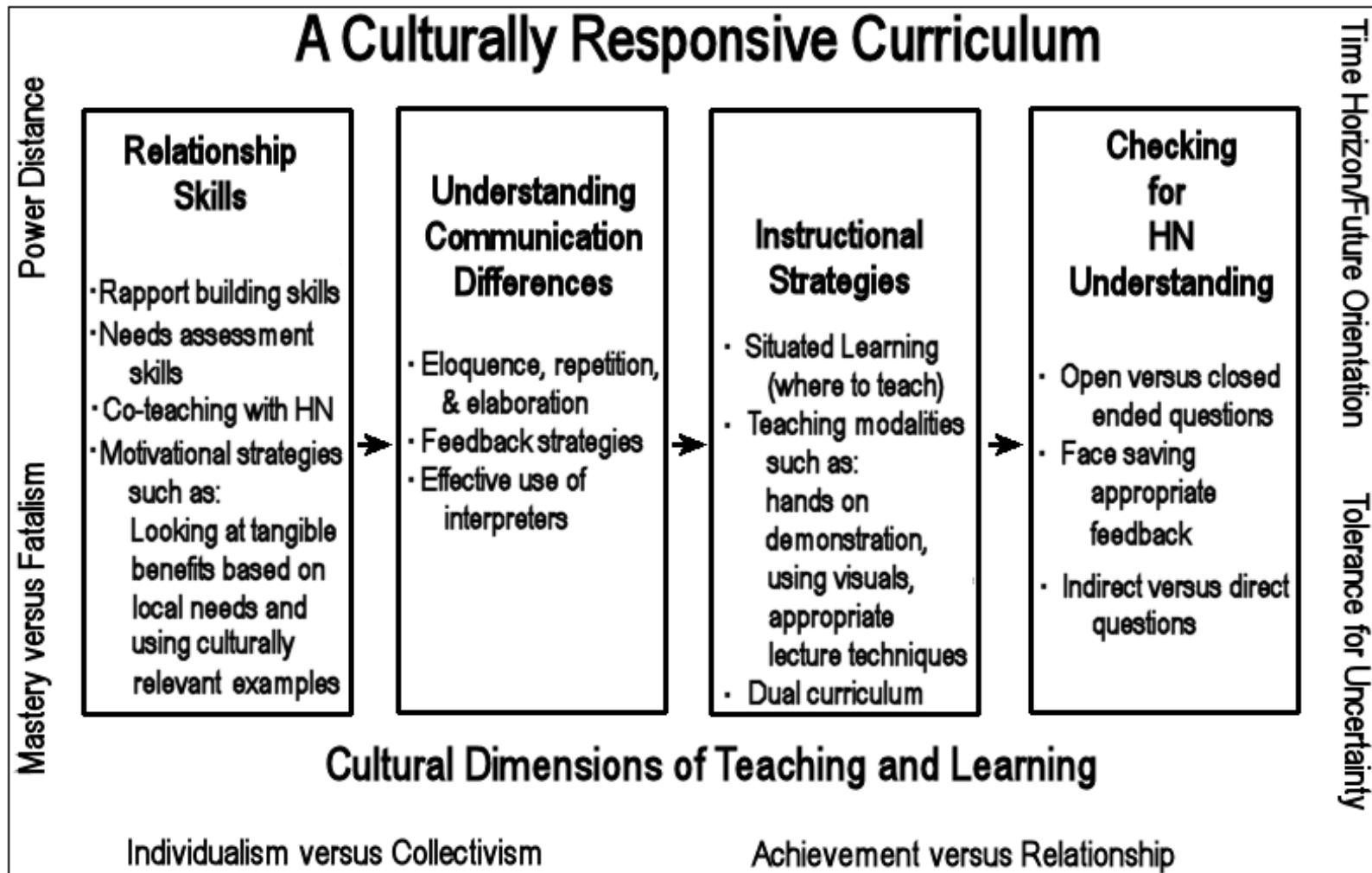


Figure 2. A culturally responsive curriculum

A successful training curriculum will allow for Soldiers to move from their previous cultural understanding and teaching knowledge to a more advanced stage. The training will provide them the knowledge and know-how of effective cross-cultural training strategies and training events which will move them to a higher level of competence as demonstrated in Figure 3.

Cultural Competencies	Training Strategies
Open Minded Group orientation Tolerance for ambiguity/ uncertainty Relaxed time orientation Relationship over task orientation Understand communication patterns	Modeling/Demonstration on teaching Co-teaching Teach to all senses Subtle feedback/ assessment techniques Appropriate direct instruction (lecture) Open ended questions Classroom and field based
Close minded Individualistic Rigid - Spit and Polish Focused on deadlines Task orientation over relationship	Long PowerPoint presentations Lecture only - didactic Handouts Assigned homework Yes/no questions Classroom based

Ineffective Training Event

Figure 3. Competence and strategies needed for an effective cross-cultural teaching event

A Dynamic Model of Advising in Cross-Cultural Environments

The goal of an innovative advisor training curriculum is to give Soldiers a better understanding of the intercultural dynamics at play in the teaching/learning context and to improve both cultural and instructional competencies. Figure 4 below provides the “big picture” of successful advising, and the intercultural arena in which advising takes place. Each half of the diagram represents an individual functioning within his or her culture. Overlap between the two occurs in this context through the process of advising. As shown, structural challenges can negatively impact successful advising, while an advisor training curriculum that includes relevant and powerful content, accessible and effective modes of delivery, and ongoing, in-country support, will positively impact advising efforts.

Improved training will help decrease the cultural distance between U.S. Soldiers and counterparts, resulting in more efficient, effective advising, and mission success.

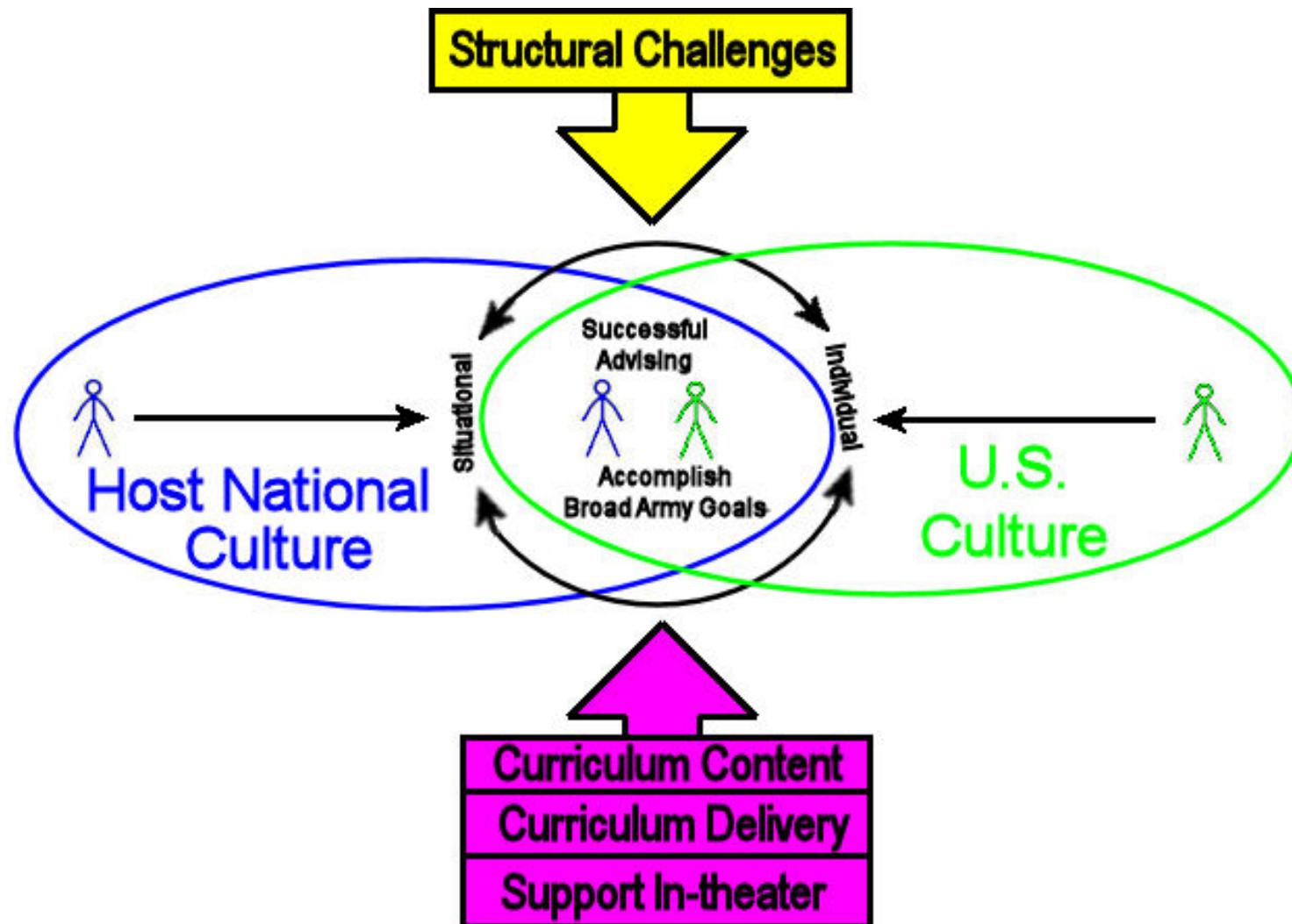


Figure 4. A dynamic model of advising

Summary

In order for military advisors to be more effective and efficient teachers, coaches, and trainers, they must possess both cross-cultural and instructional competencies. The literature review and interviews with Soldiers and subject matter experts in the areas of education and cross-cultural training revealed important information about individual and cultural differences in learner motivation, education systems, and the importance of developing strong relationships between the learner and the instructor or coach. We have identified key cultural competencies that affect cross-cultural teaching and coaching, including knowledge of Power Distance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Achievement versus Relationship, Tolerance for Uncertainty, Time Horizon/Future Orientation, and Mastery versus Fatalism. We have also identified key teaching competencies, including establishing effective teaching/training relationships with host nationals, knowledge of interactive teaching methods, skills in co-teaching with host nationals, and the ability to effectively check for understanding and giving feedback to counterparts in a culturally appropriate manner. Thus, a curriculum for American advisors and instructors who will be deployed in host national countries should be grounded in cultural dimensions of teaching and learning, and should include modules in:

- Relationship building;
- Communication differences;
- Instructional strategies; and
- Checking for understanding.

In addition, a training curriculum for advisors should include in-country support where Soldiers can continue to develop their skills and understanding while working with host nation counterparts. Improved training for transition team advisors will result in more effective, efficient, and safe training of host nationals, and help accomplish the U.S. military's broader goal of helping develop stability and security around the globe.

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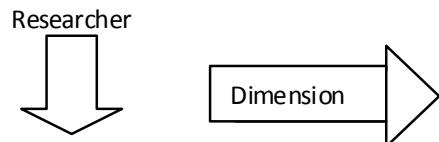
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Appendix A
Summary of the Literature on Cross-Cultural Dimensions



Hofstede	Distance Power	Individualism/Collectivism	Masculinity/Femininity	Uncertainty Avoidance	Long Term Orientation			
Schwartz	Hierarchy	Conservatism (collectivism) Intellectual autonomy Affective autonomy	Egalitarian (low MAS) Mastery (high MAS)		Conservatism (tradition and group)	Harmony		
GLOBE	Power Distance	Collectivism I (institutional) Collectivism II (toward one's ingroup) Performance orientation	Assertiveness Gender egalitarianism Humane orientation	Uncertainty Avoidance	Future orientation			
Klein	Power Distance		Achievement vs Relationship	Tolerance for Uncertainty	Time Horizon	Mastery vs Fatalism	Hypothetical vs concrete reasoning	Individual attribution vs System attribution Differentiation vs Dialectical reasoning

Appendix B

Subject Matter Experts

A list and short description of the qualification and backgrounds of the interculturalists and cross-cultural training and education experts who were consulted for this project.

Dr. Janet Bennett is Executive Director of the Intercultural Communication Institute (ICI), which she co-founded in 1986. Dr. Bennett is a Director of the ICI/University of the Pacific Master of Arts in Intercultural Relations, and teaches in the Portland State University Department of Education. She has published several articles and chapters on intercultural theory and training in academic books and journals.

Dr. Milton Bennett is a co-founder and Director of the Intercultural Communication Institute. His Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (co-developed with Mitchell Hammer) are used internationally to guide intercultural training design and to assess intercultural competence. He has received the highest awards for excellence from the Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research (SIETAR). He was a faculty member at Portland State University, and is the author of numerous publications.

Dr. Helen Boyle is Program Director, Center for Middle East and North Africa Programs for the Educational Development Center, a global nonprofit organization that designs, delivers and evaluates large-scale national and international initiatives. Dr. Boyle has done research, taught and worked in Morocco, Yemen, Ethiopia, the Congo, Ghana and Zambia. Dr. Boyle was a featured speaker at the June 11th, 2007 Congressional Briefing on Education in Islamic Societies and has recently published a chapter in the book, *Islam and Education* (2007).

Dr. R.S. Zaharna is Associate Professor at American University in Washington, D.C., and an internationally recognized expert in Arab communication. She has advised on communication projects for multinational corporations, non-governmental organizations, diplomatic missions, and international organizations, including the United Nations, World Bank, and USAID. She has given Congressional testimony on numerous occasions on U.S. public diplomacy in the Arab and Islamic world and has addressed military personnel in the United States and Europe. Dr. Zaharna is currently a Middle East analyst for Foreign Policy in Focus.

Dr. Mitchell R. Hammer is principal in Hammer Consulting, LLC, an intercultural conflict and crisis resolution consulting firm, and professor of international peace and conflict resolution in the School of International Service at the American University in Washington D.C. Dr. Hammer has published widely, with over 50 articles in various academic and professional books and journals.

Duncan Calhoun is a trainer for Sun Educational Services, and currently works in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He is a South African native with over 15 years of experience as a trainer in Middle Eastern, Arab, and African nations. He currently teaches technical courses in Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, and Nigeria.

Shane Carlson is the Regional Manager for the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia for Sun Microsystems, Sun Services division. He has been teaching and working with host nationals in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, and United Arab Emirates, as well as in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and Pakistan since 1990.

Michael A. Fleming, CSP, is Chairman and Principal Consultant for Decision Point Associates, Inc., a company specializing in hazard recognition and safety leadership development for oil and gas related industries. Mr. Fleming's work provides many opportunities to work with host nationals in Arab and other countries and cultures around the world. Michael has over 30 years of professional experience, and currently conducts and supports safety training in the Middle East, Africa, Europe, South America, the U.S., and Canada.

Dr. Daniel Liston is Professor of Education in the Educational Foundations, Policy and Practice program at the University of Colorado at Boulder, in the instruction and curriculum content areas program. Professor Liston is co-editor of the Journal of Teacher Education (2005-2009).

Petr Zemanek is a trainer with Sun Educational Services in Dubai. He has taught technical courses in the Middle East and Africa regions since 1999, and has delivered nearly 100 technical courses in United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Mauritius, and had taught students from India and Pakistan.

Host National Subject Matter Experts

Dr. Faiz Al-Alawy is Visiting Professor of Technology at Kent State University. He was a professor, technology director, and trainer in Baghdad from 1992–2005.

Tamer Ali is an educational technologist of Afghan heritage. He owns Digital Ignite, which provides teaching and training in Afghanistan. He is on the board of directors for The Children of War, a US-based non-profit organization that runs three schools and a young-adult training center in Afghanistan.

Appendix C

Interview Protocols and Questions

International Cross-Cultural Education Specialists

Introduction Given By Researchers

“The Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) is interested in gathering information regarding formal and informal educational systems and instructional practices in the Middle East, in order to learn how U. S. educators and trainers might improve their teaching and coaching skills of individuals from that area.

Advisors trained by the Army go to Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries in the Middle East to help train host nationals in a variety of areas and teach them a broad range of skills. For example, they train members of the Iraqi Army to set up checkpoints, conduct drills, and do search and rescue operations.

At present, the Army conducts cultural training for these Advisors, but very little of it addresses actual *cross-cultural teaching and coaching strategies*. The Army is interested in improving their training methods, and we are hoping to develop a training system with this goal in mind.

Developing more effective advisor training will help the Army advise and mentor host nationals more effectively as well as foster good will, cooperation, and better understanding between American Soldiers and their counterparts in other countries.

We would like to record this interview for review by ourselves and other researchers involved with the project and we need your permission to record the interview. If it is acceptable to record the interview, we need you to state the following sentence... ‘I, <full name> give permission to record this interview.’

Before we begin, do you have any questions?

Thank you again for your participation. I would now like to begin the interview.”

Researcher will begin interview.

Copies of the interview questions begin on next page.

Questions

I'm speaking with you today to get your expert feedback and ideas about education in _____ and how it might help improve and inform Army training practices. I'd also like to ask you about some of your own experiences with cross-cultural teaching.

First, I'd like to ask you about your experiences as a cross-cultural educator.

1. Can you briefly describe your current role and responsibilities as a cross-cultural educator; where you've taught (or are currently teaching,) for how many years, and the countries in which you have taught?
2. How would you characterize the education system in _____? [The specialist's country of expertise.] What are the historical roots of the education system; is it influenced more by religious or public institutions? What are the three most important things to remember when teaching someone from _____?
3. Are you currently teaching? If so, what cross-cultural teaching methods are you currently using? What do you like about them?
4. What have been the most successful methods of teaching cross-culturally that you've experienced? Any success stories you'd like to share?
5. What are the least successful methods you've tried? What didn't work at all? Why do you think these methods were unsuccessful?
6. Are there any new or cutting edge technologies or curricula that you really like, or that seem to have exciting potential for training field-based teachers in natural settings to teach cross-culturally ?
7. In your own experiences teaching in Middle Eastern or Horn of Africa countries, did you see any differences in learning styles between the host nationals and the American teacher/s? Did you notice anything that would typically work when teaching an American student that didn't work when teaching a Middle Eastern student?
8. In your opinion, what are the key intercultural "stress points" between American and Middle Eastern (or country specific area of expertise) educational methods and systems? How are they most different from each other? In what ways are they the same?

We're interested in your ideas about cross-cultural and other theories of education and how they might inform this project.

9. What key concepts from education theory, both cross-cultural and general, do you think would be most useful to Soldiers learning to be advisors? Are there tenets from constructivism, from Kolb, Hofstede, or other theories that might help Army Advisors become better teachers?

10. If you could design an ideal class to teach Army advisors how to be better teachers or mentors in their host countries, what would it contain? What kind of methods would work best? (Role playing/Scenarios, Group Discussion, Independent Reading, Movies or Video Clips?)

We're interested in your thoughts about how to develop successful cross-cultural working relationships.

11. How do you think American advisors can best create rapport with host national Soldiers?

12. What can U.S. advisors do to gain the respect of their host national counterparts?

13. What do advisors need to know about Middle Eastern culture (particularly Iraqi or Afghani culture, or the culture they are familiar with), **in terms of teaching and learning**, that will help them to be more effective advisors and mentors?

14. What advice might you give to Soldiers who will soon be going to Iraq or Afghanistan that will help them to be more effective advisors/trainers/mentors?

15. Any other thoughts about successful strategies for teaching or mentoring cross-culturally?

Thank you for your time. Do you know anyone else who has expertise in the Middle East or Horn of Africa that might be interested in talking with us?

Host National Educational Experiences Interview Questions

Introduction Given By Researchers

“The Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) is interested in gathering information regarding the formal and informal educational system and instructional practices of individuals from Afghanistan, the Middle East, and the Horn of Africa. We are seeking information on the educational and training strategies used by those in your culture as well as the type of tasks and skills you are being taught by U.S. advisors. The purpose of the research is to examine the contexts and learning strategies taken by others in order to help U.S. military advisors become better teachers and instructors to their counterparts.”

I want to assure you that everything you say today will be completely confidential. Specifically, the information from all of the interviews we conduct will be combined and summarized so that your individual comments will not be identifiable.

We would like to record this interview for review by ourselves and other researchers involved with the project and we need your permission to record the interview. If it is acceptable to record the interview, we need you to state the following sentence... ‘*I, <Soldier’s full name> give permission to record this interview.*’

Before we begin, do you have any questions?

Thank you again for your participation. I would now like to begin the interview.”

Researcher will begin interview.

Copies of the interview questions begin on next page.

Interview Questions regarding the Educational Experiences of Host National Military Members

1. What military are you a member of?
2. What is your current rank?
3. What is your billet or title?
4. How many years have you served?
5. What is your age?
6. To date, how many American advisors have you worked with?
7. What was your rank when working with your most recent American advisor?
8. What was your role when working with your most recent American advisor?
9. How many years of school have you completed?

We are interested in knowing how you learn best, both today as an adult as well as when you were a child.

1. When you were a child, what teaching methods did teachers most often use in schools (e.g., lecture; reading to you from a book; you reading a book; demonstration; working in small groups; etc. ?
 - Which of these methods seemed to work best for you?
 - How did your parents teach you new things?
 - Your religious leaders and elders?
2. Thinking back, can you remember the best teacher you ever had?
3. What was it that made them such a good teacher?
4. As an adult, what teaching or training methods seem to work best for you?
 - What teaching methods work best for you when someone from your own culture teaches you something new?
 - When you wish to learn something new on your own, what kinds of activities do you do that seem to work best?

We are interested in your recent educational and training experiences with U. S. Soldiers.

5. Please describe your educational and training experiences with U. S. Soldiers.

- What kinds of things were being taught to you?
- What teaching methods were most often used by the instructor?
- Of those teaching methods used, which did you find most beneficial?
- Which teaching methods did not maintain your interest or were not effective for you?
- What could the instructor have done differently to make it a better learning experience?

- What was the **best** training experience you had with a US advisor?

- What did the advisor do to make it such a good experience?

We are interested in how U. S. advisors can become more effective teachers and mentors in your country..

6. How can advisors best approach a new culture and create rapport with Afghan Soldiers?

- What do advisors need to know about Afghan culture that will help them to be more effective?
- How can U.S. advisors gain the respect of their Afghan trainees?

7. What advice would you give US advisors who will be training Afghan Soldiers in the future?

- What can American advisors do to be better teachers and trainers to the Afghan Army?

Are there any other comments you'd like to make about this subject?

Thank you for participating in this interview.

Interview Questions regarding the Educational Experiences of International Students from the Middle East, Philippines, Arab/Islamic Countries and/or Africa

Introduction Given By Researchers

“The Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI) is interested in gathering information regarding formal and informal educational systems and instructional practices in the Middle East, in order to learn how U. S. educators and trainers might improve their teaching and mentoring skills.

Advisors trained by the Army go to Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries in the Middle East to help train host nationals in a variety of areas and teach them a broad range of skills. For example, they train members of the Iraqi Army to set up checkpoints, conduct drills, and do search and rescue operations.

Developing more effective advisor training will help the Army advise and mentor host nationals more effectively as well as foster good will, cooperation, and better understanding between American Soldiers and their counterparts in other countries.

I want to assure you that everything you say today will be completely confidential. Specifically, the information from all of the interviews we conduct will be combined and summarized so that your individual comments will not be identifiable. Your name will not be used anywhere in the report, and your comments will not be connected with your name in any way. For example, if we choose to quote you, it will say, “According to a graduate student from Iraq...” and your name will not be mentioned. Do you have any questions about confidentiality?

We would like to record this interview for review by ourselves and other researchers involved with the project and we need your permission to record the interview. If it is acceptable to record the interview, we need you to state the following sentence... ‘*I, <full name> give permission to record this interview.*’

Before we begin, do you have any questions?

Thank you again for your participation. I would now like to begin the interview.”

Questions

Background Information:

What is your age?

Your gender (ask or simply make a note of it).

What is your country of origin – Where are you from?

What are you currently studying?

How much education did you complete in your home country?

What was your major/degree or focus of study in your home country?

What education program are you currently enrolled in?

How much of that program have you completed at the present time?

What do you hope to do professionally once you have completed your education in the US?

We are interested in knowing how you learn best, both today as an adult as well as when you were a child.

8. When you were a child, what teaching methods did teachers most often use in schools (e.g., lecture; reading to you from a book; you reading a book; demonstration; direct experience; working in small groups; films; etc. ?

- Which of these methods seemed to work best for you?
- How did your parents teach you new things?
- Your religious leaders?

9. Who is the best teacher you've ever had?

10. What did they do that made them such a good teacher?

11. As an adult, what teaching or training methods seem to be best for you?

- What teaching methods work best for you when someone from your own culture teaches you something new?
- When you wish to learn something new on your own, what kinds of activities do you do that seem to work best?

We are interested in learning more about the education system in your country.

12. How would you characterize the education system in _____? (Your country)
 - What are the historical roots of the education system; is it influenced more by religious or public institutions?
13. What are the three most important things to remember when teaching someone from (your country)?
14. In your opinion, what are the biggest differences between schools and education in America and (your country)? How are they most different from each other? In what ways are they the same?
15. In your opinion, what is the ideal relationship between teacher and student?

We are interested in your recent experiences with and first impressions of the U. S. education system.

16. What was your first impression of American teaching and teachers?
 - What surprised you?
 - What things were difficult to get used to?
 - Was there anything you really liked – anything that was a nice surprise?
17. What teaching methods were most often used by your American instructors?
18. Of those teaching methods used, which did you find most beneficial?
19. Which teaching methods did not maintain your interest or were not effective for you?
20. Do you feel your American instructors were effective in motivating students from (your country) to learn? Why or why not? How could they have better motivated them/you?
21. How could your instructors have had better rapport with their students from your country?
22. Do you see any differences in learning styles between American students and students from (your country)? Did you notice anything that would typically work when teaching an American student that didn't work when teaching a student from your country?

We are interested in how U. S. advisors can become more effective teachers and trainers.

23. What advice would you have for American advisors who wish to be more effective teachers and trainers in countries like yours?
24. What do advisors need to know about your culture, **in terms of teaching and learning** will help them to be more effective teachers and trainers?
25. Any other thoughts about successful strategies for teaching or mentoring cross-culturally?

Do you know anyone else who might be interested in talking with us?

May we contact you in the future for follow up questions or questions of clarification?

Thank you for your time.